BURKE

THE PRESENT DISCONTENTS

PITT PRESS SERIES

P.96 - Pl. 2f.

Pitt Press Series

BURKE

THOUGHTS ON THE CAUSE OF THE PRESENT DISCONTENTS

Cambridge University Press
Fetter Lane, London

New York
Bombay, Calcutta, Madras
Toronto
Macmillan

Tokyo
Maruzen Company, Ltd

All rights reserved

EDMUND BURKE

THOUGHTS ON THE CAUSE OF THE PRESENT DISCONTENTS

Edited by

W. MURISON, M.A.
HEAD OF THE ENGLISH DEPARTMENT
ABERDEEN GRAMMAR SCHOOL

Cambridge:
at the University Press
1930

First Edition 1913
Reprinted 1930

PRINTED IN GREAT BRITAIN

PREFACE

THIS edition attempts to supply the higher forms in schools with the necessary equipment for a proper appreciation of *The Present Discontents*. The introduction and notes deal, to a large extent, with historical and political matters; many things that Burke could omit and still be intelligible to his contemporaries, we must seek to bear in mind in order to understand the true bearing of the pamphlet. The language, too, requires a certain amount of explanation. Burke is at times abstruse; and in the hundred and fifty years since *The Present Discontents* was written, several words have changed in meaning. No one, however, will regret time and trouble spent on *The Present Discontents*. For, as Lecky has said, "There is no political figure of the eighteenth century which retains so enduring an interest, or which repays so amply a careful study, as Edmund Burke."

Those who desire further information will find help in the following selection of authorities: Morley's *Edmund Burke: A Historical Study*, and *Burke* ("English Men of Letters"); MacCunn's *Political Philosophy of Burke*;

Prior's *Life of Burke*; May's *Constitutional History*; Lecky's *History of England in the Eighteenth Century*; vol. VI of *Cambridge Modern History*; McCarthy's *Four Georges*; Green's *Short History*; the Histories of Stanhope, Massey, Bright, and Hunt; Biographies of Burke's contemporaries or their lives in *Dictionary of National Biography*, *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, and *Chambers's Encyclopaedia*; Payne's *Burke: Select Works*; Walpole's *Memoirs* and *Letters*; *Annual Register*; *Letters of Junius*; Macaulay's *Essays* (*Chatham*, *Clive*, *Hastings*).

Thanks are due to the Keeper of the Department of Printed Books, British Museum, for information regarding early editions.

W. M.

July, 1913.

CONTENTS

	PAGES
INTRODUCTION	ix—xxxii
I. LIFE OF BURKE	ix—xiii
II. PUBLIC AFFAIRS	xiii—xviii
III. *The Present Discontents* . .	xviii—xxvii
APPENDIX	xxvii—xxxii
CHRONOLOGICAL TABLE	xxxiii—xxxviii
The Present Discontents	1—103
ANALYSIS OF ARGUMENT . . .	104
SUMMARY OF PAMPHLET . . .	105—112
NOTES	113—160
INDEX	161—163

INTRODUCTION

I. LIFE OF BURKE

EDMUND BURKE was born in Dublin. The date of his birth is uncertain: January 12, 1729, appears to be best authenticated. His father, an attorney, was Protestant, his mother Catholic; a combination which is regarded as enabling us to understand Burke's religious toleration. At the age of twelve Edmund went to the village of Ballitore, where Adam Shackleton, a Quaker from Yorkshire, had a famous school. Shackleton's goodness and integrity impressed Burke very deeply. Two years later he entered Trinity College, Dublin, where he remained till he graduated B.A. in 1748, diligent in his studies but desultory in his manner of studying. He tells us that from 1744 to 1746 he was under the influence, first of the *furor mathematicus*, then of the *furor logicus*, next of the *furor historicus*, and finally of the *furor poeticus*. In Classics, Cicero was his favourite; his model both for life and for literature.

Early in 1750 he came to England to keep his terms at the Middle Temple. But, though his writings and speeches show that he had more than a tincture of law, legal studies did not attract him. Giving up the thought of qualifying as a barrister, he turned to literature. In 1756 he married Dr Nugent's daughter, a Catholic lady, who however conformed. In the same year Burke published *A Vindication of Natural Society*, in ridicule as well as in imitation of

Bolingbroke, and *The Origin of our Ideas of the Sublime and Beautiful.* On his suggestion, Dodsley produced, in 1759, the first issue of the *Annual Register*, which Burke wrote. To the successive issues, till about 1788, he contributed the survey of events. Among his acquaintances at this time was W. G. Hamilton—"Single-speech" Hamilton—to whom he became a sort of private secretary. When Hamilton was appointed Secretary for Ireland in 1761, he took Burke to Dublin, and obtained for him a pension of £300 on the Irish Treasury. Burke soon threw up the pension, as he refused to give all his time to Hamilton's service.

Rockingham was appointed Prime Minister in 1765 and made Burke his private secretary. A little later Burke entered Parliament as member for Wendover, and speedily distinguished himself by two speeches on the American question, receiving compliments from Pitt and showing the best judges that a great orator had arisen. This ministry lasted only a year, and Burke ceased to be private secretary; but he continued among the foremost statesmen of the time, indispensable to his party and a terror to his opponents for his readiness and skill in debate. His high qualities as man and politician were manifest also in his writings: *Observations on the Present State of the Nation* (1769) and *Thoughts on the Cause of the Present Discontents* (1770).

In 1771 he became agent for New York province; and he strenuously opposed the arbitrary proceedings of the House of Commons on the question of the publication of debates. About this time, he was frequently accused, particularly in 1772, of being the author of the *Letters of Junius.* A visit to Paris in 1773 gave him an insight into French affairs and an aversion to French democracy that bore remarkable fruit some twenty years later. Next year came the famous *Speech on American Taxation*, and Bristol, the second city in England, did honour to itself by offering Burke a seat in Parliament. The succeeding years were full of work, and rendered notable by the great *Speech*

on Conciliation with America (1775), and *Letter to the Sheriffs* (1777). He also spoke on the employment of Indians to fight against the Colonists, on relaxing the restrictions on Irish trade, and on alleviating the Catholic penal laws (1778). On account of his Catholic sympathies he was obnoxious to the rioters who followed Lord George Gordon in 1780. His views on trade and toleration displeased the Bristol electors, who discarded him. Next year he was chosen member for Malton.

Burke spoke earnestly for economical reform in regard to sinecures and pensions. Nor did he preach without practising; for in 1782 when he was appointed, in Rockingham's administration, Paymaster of the Forces, the monstrous perquisites of that office were abolished and the salary was fixed at £4000. Next year he held the same post under Portland, and was also busy with the affairs of the East India Company. Many a statesman has been chosen Lord Rector of a Scottish University, and Burke held that office at Glasgow in 1784 and 1785. In the latter year he visited various parts of Scotland. After Warren Hastings returned home, Burke began to move for his impeachment, and in 1788 he opened the trial with a masterpiece of oratory.

When the French Revolution broke out, Burke—in contradistinction to Pitt, who stood neutral, and to Fox, who openly blessed the outbreak—vehemently denounced the Revolutionists and all their ways. In 1770 and 1777 he thought that rebellions were not so much caused by peoples as provoked by governments, in 1775 he declared he could not draw up an indictment against a whole people. Now none so fierce as he in assailing the French nation. Had he then turned his back on his old views? Burke was the champion of liberty and order. In his earlier years he felt himself bound to oppose the king and his supporters when they injured freedom: in his later years when democracy seemed to be destroying all order and consequently liberty, he attacked democracy. He might have used Goldsmith's words (*The Traveller*, 365 *sq.*)

"And thou, fair Freedom, taught alike to feel
The rabble's rage, and tyrant's angry steel."

"Burke," it has been said, "changed his front, but never changed his ground." By his speeches and writings—*Reflections on the Revolution in France* (1790), *Appeal from the New to the Old Whigs* (1792), *Letters on a Regicide Peace* (1796)—he did more than any other single man to consolidate European resistance to the French Republic. He quarrelled also with his old Whig friends and became the idol of his old enemies. A great defender of party and an advocate of, as a rule, surrendering private judgment to party opinion, he believed that a higher call than party had come to him and that he was justified in leaving his party, even in breaking it to pieces.

In 1794 Burke retired from Parliament and received a pension from the Crown. This the Duke of Bedford attacked as inconsistent in an economical reformer, and was deservedly crushed by the *Letter to a Noble Lord.*

Burke died July 9, 1797.

Among the outstanding features of his writings and speeches are the power of repeating an idea in varying phraseology, the wealth of figurative language, the abundance of apt allusions and quotations. As a controversialist, he seeks to overwhelm his opponent with ridicule, using irony, sarcasm, invective; often, it must be said, transgressing the bounds of good taste. Speakers, in order to be intelligible to their audiences hearing the words only once, must employ plainer and more familiar diction than writers need to do. A writer as well as a speaker, Burke does not always observe this rule: in his writings he uses the devices of the speaker, in his speeches he pours forth unfamiliar and abstruse words and allusions. And however powerful in argument, profound in wisdom, glowing in rhetoric, the speech might be, this unfamiliarity of language, helped by his unattractive—if not ungainly—delivery, spoiled the spoken effect of orations, which afterwards when read filled, as they continue to fill, the reader with almost boundless

admiration. In 1785, after one of his greatest speeches—that on the Nabob of Arcot's debts—Pitt consulted Grenville whether it should be answered; and their decision was not to reply, since the speech had made no impression. In truth, at times, when Burke went on speaking, the House emptied; and he was known as the "dinner bell[1]." And yet, as Lord Morley has said (*Burke*, in "English Men of Letters," pp. 2, 3),

"Opinion is slowly, but without reaction, settling down to the verdict that Burke is one of the abiding names in our history...because he added to the permanent considerations of wise political thought, and to the maxims of wise practice in great affairs, and because he imprints himself upon us with a magnificence and elevation of expression that places him among the highest masters of literature, in one of its highest and most commanding senses...We feel no emotion of revolt when Mackintosh speaks of Shakspere and Burke in the same breath, as being both of them above mere talent. And we do not dissent when Macaulay, after reading Burke's works over again, exclaims, 'How admirable! The greatest man since Milton!'"

II. PUBLIC AFFAIRS, 1760—1770

The accession of George III opened a new era. The subordination of the monarchy to ministers was to cease: the king was to rule as well as reign. George had been brought up under the influence of his mother. He had learnt to consider his grandfather's submission to the Whigs a disgrace for a sovereign. "George, be king," had been the never-ceasing burden of his mother's injunctions, while Bolingbroke's *Idea of a Patriot King*—to rule for the people's good but according to his own will—had been held up as his

[1] See "Appendix to Introduction—A."

model. He, therefore, began his reign with the definite aim of restoring the royal prerogative—that was once more "a fashionable word," said Horace Walpole—of regaining the choice of ministers, of destroying party government, of demolishing the Whig oligarchy.

The new monarch ascended the throne with advantages never possessed by his grandfather or his great-grandfather. He was young; he was affable; he could "glory in the name of Briton"; and he was not closely tied to Hanover and Hanoverian ways. Jacobitism was dead; and the Tories, long excluded from royal favour, gathered round the young king, ready to transfer their monarchical principles to the House of Hanover, whose representative was now a stout Churchman and a strong believer in royal prerogative. And so his band of "King's Friends" included many who honestly supported him from pure loyalty as well as those bought by pensions and titles. For George employed the royal wealth and patronage to secure parliamentary support. The Whigs, too, were divided. Even in the ministry in 1760, the Newcastle section and the Pitt section were estranged. Newcastle's strength lay in patronage, which the king had determined to exercise himself: Pitt's strength lay in his popularity, especially for his successful war policy; and the king meant the war to cease.

The Earl of Bute, the king's tutor, was put into the cabinet; and, when in 1761 Pitt, besides resisting the conclusion of the war with France, advocated immediate war with Spain, since France and Spain had renewed the Family Compact, Bute opposed him. Pitt resigned in October; a few months later, Newcastle, finding his plans and wishes neglected, also resigned; and Bute, inexperienced and incompetent, was appointed Prime Minister by the king, May 1762. Peace negotiations were rapidly pushed on; and in 1763 the Peace of Paris formally ended the war. Hardly had this taken place when Bute quitted office, April. The king's plan of ruling through ministers of his own choosing had failed; and he must fall back on the Whig party, or

rather parties, for the Whigs were now in three divisions. The main division consisted of the followers of the Marquis of Rockingham, with whom went the Dukes of Devonshire, Portland, and Richmond, Lord John Cavendish, General Conway, Sir George Saville, and other representatives of the great aristocratic families. Burke was soon to be the chief pillar of this connexion. "Indeed, Burke," wrote Richmond in 1772, "you have more merit than any man in keeping us together." The supporters of Rockingham may be called the incorruptible. They were thus comparatively powerless, because the House of Commons desired to be bribed. Grenville led another set of Whigs, Bedford a third; while Pitt stood aloof with his personal friends. The king selected Grenville as likely to work best with him.

In the speech from the throne, the glory and the benefit of the Peace of Paris had been eulogized; and this eulogy John Wilkes called false in No. 45 of the *North Briton*. The king ordered a prosecution; and a general warrant, specifying no names, was issued. Wilkes was arrested; but the Chief Justice of the Common Pleas liberated him under his privilege as a member of parliament. Urged on by the king, the Commons declared No. 45 a libel; and the Lords attacked Wilkes for the *Essay on Woman*. He had retired to Paris; but early in 1764 a majority of the Commons got him expelled from the House, and the Court of King's Bench outlawed him. These proceedings made Wilkes, personally worthless as he was, a popular hero. The attempt of the common hangman to burn No. 45 provoked a riot.

But it was not merely at home that Grenville blundered. He planned to raise money by taxing the American Colonists; and in 1765 the Stamp Act was passed. The Colonies protested, mainly on the plea of "No taxation without representation." Before, however, the evil consequences of the Act had time to develop, Grenville had fallen. The king grew to dislike both Grenville and Bedford, who had joined the ministry. Their folly in regard to the Regency Bill was

the climax. The King's Friends were ordered to vote against the ministry, and the ministry collapsed. George was now forced to accept Rockingham as Prime Minister; and the House of Commons, with no general election to change its personnel, condemned all general warrants as well as agreed to the repeal of the Stamp Act, 1766. But Rockingham soon fell: the King's Friends again received the command to oppose the king's ministers. The next cabinet, though formed by Pitt, was under the nominal leadership of the Duke of Grafton. The members of this administration were drawn from various sections, since Pitt was an enemy of the party system.

Pitt was created Earl of Chatham and lost his popularity. His health gave way, and Grafton had the sole power; but he was unable to control such men as Charles Townshend, Chancellor of the Exchequer, who in 1767 renewed the taxation of the Americans by means of import duties. This roused the anger of the Colonists, and drew the Colonies more and more together against Britain. Massachusetts led the way, with its capital Boston—the largest town in the Colonies. Mobs filled the streets of Boston, shouting against the taxes and jeering at the revenue officers. Serious riots occurred in 1768; and in 1770 the first blood was shed in the American quarrel.

Meanwhile the Grafton ministry had become involved in serious troubles at home. The general election was fixed for the beginning of 1768—the first since 1761, though there had been five administrations differing in character, policy and legislation, but all in turn supported for a time by the majority in the Commons. Hence, when denouncing indiscriminate support of ministers, Burke says (p. 89), "Parliamentary support comes and goes with office, totally regardless of the man, or the merit." In 1768, Wilkes, having returned from France, was elected for Middlesex. He appeared before the Court of King's Bench on the matter of his outlawry, and was committed to prison. The mob rescued him; he again surrendered; the mob came

into collision with the military, when several persons were shot. Wilkes's outlawry was reversed; but he was sentenced to a term of imprisonment for libel. Still more, however, was to come. Lord Weymouth had written advising the Surrey magistrates to call in the aid of the soldiers to suppress riots. Wilkes published the letter with a stinging criticism; and the shooting of the rioters in St George's Fields round the Court of King's Bench he stigmatized as a bloody massacre. Though Weymouth was a peer, the Commons took the matter up; and, unwarrantably assuming the function of a court of law, they voted Wilkes's denunciation of Weymouth a libel. Adding to this No. 45 of the *North Briton* and the *Essay on Woman*—for which Wilkes had been already punished—they expelled him, February 3, 1769. Chatham, who had now resigned office, Burke and Grenville were among those who opposed these proceedings. The mob broke into disturbances. In the *Public Advertiser*, then the most important paper in London, the mysterious "Junius" lashed the ministers with the fiercest virulence for their action in regard to Wilkes, for their treatment of the American Colonies, and for their foreign policy, especially in the case of Corsica and the Manilla ransom. Wilkes was re-elected for Middlesex, February 16; and next day he was declared by the Commons incapable of sitting in the present Parliament—an action indefensible on sound principles of law; for in that way anyone disliked by the majority might be excluded from the House, not on any known legal ground but merely by the arbitrary will of the Commons. Wilkes was more of a hero than ever, and was a third time elected, March 16; to be again declared incapable. A fourth time he was elected, April 13, by a majority of 1143 votes to 296 for Colonel Luttrell. The House then passed a resolution that Colonel Luttrell was member for Middlesex—a monstrous perversion of the right of election, if the House could thus falsify election returns and give the seat to a candidate whom the electors had not chosen. The assaults of the

opposition increased in vehemence; "Junius" grew more virulent; addresses and petitions[1] poured in from all parts of the country; the mob broke out in greater turbulence. Early in 1770 the Grafton ministry went down, and was succeeded, not by an administration drawn from the victorious opposition of Rockingham Whigs and Chatham's followers, but by Grafton's Chancellor of the Exchequer, Lord North, with the pronounced supporters of the king. George felt strong enough to defy the Whigs and to choose ministers who would act as he himself wished.

About this time there was indeed a danger that the Crown would regain most, if not all, of the power lost at the Revolution. The opposition was divided and dispirited. The king and his supporters, having broken the old parties and undermined the power of the aristocratic Whigs, had strengthened themselves by means of government patronage and all the resources of the Crown. In both Lords and Commons the king had now a solid phalanx, which in the circumstances of the time threatened to be a permanent defence of autocratic rule. A glance forward, however, shows that this disaster was averted chiefly by two things: the growth of a free press; and the discredit that fell on the ministry on account of the American War.

III. *THE PRESENT DISCONTENTS*

§ 1.

It was amid the welter of public affairs, 1769—1770, that Burke wrote *Thoughts on the Cause of the Present Discontents.* The whole was ready in December for Rockingham's inspection, but it received touches in the early part of 1770, as is evident from references to events that then occurred. The first six editions—four appeared in 1770, two quarto and two octavo—were published anonymously, but the authorship cannot have been long doubtful.

[1] See the Middlesex Petition, "Appendix to Introduction—B."

§ 2.

The text of the present edition has been printed from Collected Works, 1826. It has been compared with a copy of the first edition and with a reprint of the sixth edition, 1784.

Both in writing and in correcting for the press, Burke employed the services of others, and the early editions of his works exhibit considerable differences of spelling. Even the same edition may show variations of the same word on different pages. Our present text, which keeps part of the old orthography, has such variations. Contrast *exterior*, *interior* (p. 32) with *exteriour* (p. 74), *interiour* (p. 28). Some of the older spellings retained here are *publick*, *topicks*, *politicks; horrours*, *controul; dutchy; phrensy; bigotted; æra; cryer; harrass*. None of them, however, need cause any difficulty.

When we compare the text of the sixth edition, for example, with that of the first, we see that Burke sought to make improvements even in minute points. In the first edition he wrote (see p. 60, below) "legal authority by which they sit," which he afterwards changed to "legal authority by which the house of commons sits"—an alteration manifestly for the sake of perspicuity. Again (see p. 17) the first edition has "those who acted then in publick," which later appears as "those who at that time acted in publick." This change is most likely for the sake of euphony. Sensitiveness to sound is the reason for another change (see p. 25). The first edition has the unmelodious "with the phantom of the tyranny of the Nobles," which became in improved form "with a phantom of tyranny in the Nobles."

§ 3.

The construction of the pamphlet is admirable. The parts are carefully arranged; and, without appearing to have an elaborate plan, the whole is firmly and properly jointed. The "Analysis of Argument" (p. 104) shows how each

succeeding step grows out of the preceding; and how the defence of party (pp. 91—102), which at first sight may appear an excrescence, develops naturally from what has just gone before. Note also the transitions, the short summaries here and there, the glances backward and forward. For instance, the paragraph beginning "Every age has" (p. 10) sums up the two previous paragraphs. Compare the following passages: "These opportunities and these arguments...consideration" (pp. 15, 16); "Thus much... support" (p. 25); "After having stated...at court" (p. 51); "So far I...upon parliament" (pp. 56, 57). On page 60, line 3, is a fine example of a short sentence clenching the argument.

§ 4.

The Present Discontents furnishes many instances to show how Burke employs various forms of expression to present one idea from different points of view and thus impress it on reader or hearer. See, for example, the paragraph (p. 65) beginning "It signifies very little." Here the last sentence skilfully re-iterates and enforces the idea of the one before. This is pre-eminently an orator's device; and just as Burke's writing re-acted on his speaking, so his speaking re-acted on his writing. It made him aim at intelligibility. He even introduces some of the orator's formal devices to rouse the flagging interest of the audience and keep their attention. At one time (p. 47) he pretends he has almost used an expression he should not: "the rest of the (I had like to have said British) administration." Again (p. 57) he says, "I hope I shall be indulged in a few observations." Then (p. 80) he interrupts a statement by means of two questions, the answer to which makes the conclusion of the unfinished statement: "they will *endeavour* to confine" etc. In a fourth passage (p. 100) he leads us to expect a sentence to end in one way, and surprises us by another ending: "In the meantime we are born only to be men."

From the number and the variety of figurative expressions

in Burke's writings and speeches, we may judge what he was interested in or what the circumstances of his time brought under his notice. In *The Present Discontents* we find figures from the technical language of law, from astronomy and astrology, from sport and gaming, and from various other forms of human activity. The following examples will illustrate these:

"the *usufruct* of their voices...*fee and inheritance*," p. 10.

"in a sort of mortmain and inalienable domain," p. 12.

"a direct simple issue lies, triable by plain men," p. 98.

"However, this was only...blown over," p. 33.

"tossed about like tennis balls," p. 31.

"an extraordinary cast upon the dice," p. 98.

"strikes a palsy into every nerve," p. 44.

"while they have all their canvas...drives them backward," p. 27.

"the shattered and old-fashioned fortress of prerogative," p. 61.

"this garrison of *king's men*, which is stationed, as in a citadel," p. 90.

"the sinking fund the great buttress," p. 81.

"Our constitution stands on a nice equipoise, with steep precipices and deep waters upon all sides of it," p. 87.

Irony, as well as blunt, homely metaphor—to some tastes the bluntness may be vulgar—will be found playing a great part in Burke's rough humour and sarcastic ridicule. Examples are:

"those good souls," "innocent gentlemen," p. 20.

"in the midst of their wise deliberation," p. 42.

"this kind intervention," p. 73.

"after gorging himself with a full feast of admiration," p. 9.

"soused over head and ears into the deepest and dirtiest pits of corruption," p. 19.

"infamously monopolized and huckstered," p. 21.

"those bitter waters of which...we have drunk until we are ready to burst," p. 35.

"to rake in the dirt of every kind of expedient," p. 50.

No less interesting are Burke's literary quotations and allusions. They are apt, expressive, and skilfully used. Their sources are the Bible, and the literatures of Greece, Rome, France and England. Biblical quotations and allusions occur on pages 33, 43, 46, 54, 63, 64, 73, 89, 96, 101, 102 (The Prayer Book). Classical sources are mainly Cicero, Horace, and Tacitus; as on pages 9, 20, 50, 56, 67, 68, 94. Sully and Molière, Shakespeare, Addison and Fielding figure on pages 2, 7, 20, 49, 82, 95.

§ 5.

George III had been acting on Bolingbroke's system of government by a patriot king, who should "govern as soon as he begins to reign, call into the administration such men as he can assure himself will serve on the same principles on which he intends to govern, put himself at the head of his people in order to govern, or more properly, subdue all parties." To this, however, George had added a favourite standing between himself and his ministers. This plan (the mainspring according to Burke, of all the political unrest since 1760) was what he set himself, influenced to some extent by Montesquieu's *Esprit des Lois*, to expound and to defeat in his *Thoughts on the Cause of the Present Discontents*. Though spoken of as emanating from a private person (p. 1) it was intended to represent the views of the Rockingham party as a whole and to be a call to arms. Accordingly it was submitted before publication to Rockingham and to others, who cordially approved of it generally. Statements here and there, however, as well as interpretations of events and remedies, were found fault with. Some of these it will now be necessary to examine.

The Duke of Portland, for example, considered that the references to the king (as pp. 16, 17, "These singular advantages...full of glory") minimized too much the part played

by George himself, who was not, said Portland, "so absolute a thing of straw." The glozing over of the king's action was evidently to conciliate him, while assailing his tools. A similar attitude is adopted in the Middlesex Petition[1], where the blame for the grievances is transferred to "certain evil-minded persons, who attempt to infuse into your royal mind notions and opinions of the most dangerous and pernicious tendency." George, however, must bear his own burden. "In 1770," says May (*Constitutional History*, I. 38), "Lord Chatham stated in Parliament that since the king's accession there had been no original (*i.e.* independent) minister; and examples abound of the king's personal participation in every political event of this period." His hand appears in the various attacks on Wilkes; his debts were, without doubt, largely due to the lavish expenditure of money in parliamentary and electoral corruption; he opposed conciliation with America and advocated coercion. So bitterly was the king's interference felt in regard to Wilkes that Benjamin Franklin wrote that if Wilkes had had a good private character and George a bad one, the subject might have displaced the sovereign.

Portland also took exception to Burke's gentle treatment of Bute (pp. 33, 34), remarking that though Bute "may possibly not have had sense enough to form all the plan himself, he had villany enough to adopt it, and introduce it in a manner that perhaps nobody had the means of doing so effectually as himself." Contemporary opinion held that, even after he quitted office, he remained the power behind the throne: see Lord Chesterfield's remark quoted in note to p. 46. Bute, however, in 1773 explicitly denied that at any time after 1765 he offered advice to the king either directly or indirectly. But looking at Bute's influence on George when Prince of Wales, 1751—1760, and his power in public affairs in the early years of the reign, particularly 1760—1763, we must admit that too much leniency is shown him.

[1] See "Appendix to Introduction—B."

Chatham wrote to Rockingham about the injurious effect of the pamphlet on the common cause, *i.e.* on the opposition to the Court and the ministry with their servile majority. The advanced reformers were angry: see, for instance, Mrs Macaulay's "Reply." One particular cause of offence was Burke's remedy, "the interposition of the body of the people itself" (p. 87). We must not read into this phrase the meaning it would carry in the twentieth century with an extended franchise and a huge electorate. To Burke "the people" politically meant a very select number, some 400,000 only (see quotation from *Regicide Peace* on p. 114). He limited also the meaning of "interposition." It is true that he urged electors to scrutinize the conduct of their representatives (p. 88). It is true that he elsewhere spoke of his reverence for the opinion of the people. But by opinion he does not seem to have meant more than an expression of wishes or grievances. He certainly repudiated any definite judgment by the people on any political principle or policy. He scornfully rejected the idea that the constituents should dictate to their representative. Naturally then Burke did not satisfy those who wished their member to represent their opinions. But otherwise his remedy was unsatisfactory; for it was a thorough-going reform that was required in order that Burke's aim of a House of Commons controlling the Executive and itself controlled by the constituencies could be realized. The franchise was restricted and unequal, the limited electorate could be easily bribed, the representatives were themselves corrupt. Decayed boroughs, with few inhabitants or none—the absolute property of noblemen—returned members, while the wealthy and intelligent inhabitants of great manufacturing towns, as Leeds, Manchester, and Birmingham, were unrepresented. "In 1793, the society of the friends of the people were prepared to prove that in England and Wales seventy members were returned by thirty-five places in which there were scarcely any electors at all; that ninety members were returned by forty-six places with less than fifty electors; and thirty-seven members by

nineteen places having not more than one hundred electors" (May, *Constitutional History*, I. 276 *sq.*). To parliamentary reform Burke was a strenuous opponent all his life. He seems to have held that, instead of increasing the number of voters, statesmen would do well to decrease them. It is easily understood, then, that Burke's remedy was unsatisfactory, not merely to the thorough-paced reformers who put forward reforms that were not carried out till sixty years later, but also to more moderate men like Chatham. As early as 1766 Chatham denounced borough representation as the rotten part of the constitution, which, if it did not drop off, must be amputated. Four years later he wished to add a third member to every county to counterbalance corrupt and venal boroughs. This, he said was one obvious means of securing purity of Parliament, the corner-stone in the Commonwealth.

We shall now briefly consider other passages in the pamphlet, to which exception has been taken. The elaborate account (pp. 11 *sqq.*) of the system of the Double Cabinet is regarded as altogether overdrawn. George III was simply following the endeavour of his grandfather and the purpose of his father to break away from the trammels of the Whigs. The fall of the Rockingham ministry is attributed (p. 33) to the hatred and opposition of the Court faction. The true cause was its own weakness. Burke also exaggerates (p. 44) the "venom and malignity" of the crisis in 1770. The reason for Shelburne's retirement was not (p. 47) his order to Lord Rochford to remonstrate with the French government, but disagreement with his colleagues on the coercion of America and, it is said, on the expulsion of Wilkes. From the description (p. 56) of the King's Friends, one would imagine they had all been bought by places or pensions. Many of them supported the king out of loyalty and for no selfish reason. It was not "the dreadful disorders of frequent elections" (p. 60) but the fear of losing power that led the Whigs to pass the Septennial Act. Impeachment fell into disuse with the rise of party government; but to heighten the wickedness

of the cabal, Burke charges them (p. 61) with destroying "that great guardian of the purity of the constitution." In regard to the Middlesex election, Burke (p. 64) credits Wilkes's opponents with a deep-laid scheme. They were, however, simply eager to crush an adversary and did not stop to think if their methods were illegal or not. That the constituents did not control the Commons was not the fault of the cabal (p. 69) but of the state of parliamentary representation, which Burke himself did not wish reformed. The Whigs of Queen Anne's days did not deserve the high praise (p. 95) bestowed on them by Burke.

But these blemishes are of little importance: the main value of *The Present Discontents* lies in "the exposition of the principles of a constitution, the right methods of statesmanship, and the defence of party." And that is not all. For "Burke," says Lord Morley, "will always be read with delight and edification, because in the midst of discussions on the local and accidental, he scatters apophthegms that take us into the regions of lasting wisdom." The pages of *The Present Discontents* are illuminated by aphorisms embodying in brief and pointed form a mass of thought and observation. A few of them are collected here; but they should be studied in their context, out of which they grow naturally, like Shakespeare's "All the world's a stage" or "The quality of mercy."

> "I have constantly observed, that the generality of people are fifty years, at least, behindhand in their politicks," p. 8.
>
> "Few are the partisans of departed tyranny," *ib.*
>
> "the true and only true foundations of all national and all regal greatness; affection at home, reputation abroad, trust in allies, terrour in rival nations," p. 22.
>
> "property is power," p. 24.
>
> "No lines can be laid down for civil or political wisdom," p. 43.
>
> "that great and only foundation of government, the confidence of the people," p. 49.

"Example, the only argument of effect in civil life," p. 65.

"The same principle guides in both; I mean, the opinion which is entertained by many, of the infallibility of laws and regulations, in the cure of publick disorders," p. 85.

"It is no inconsiderable part of wisdom, to know how much of an evil ought to be tolerated," p. 86.

"When bad men combine, the good must associate," p. 92.

"all virtue which is impracticable is spurious," p. 101.

"Publick life is a situation of power and energy; he trespasses against his duty who sleeps upon his watch, as well as he who goes over to the enemy," *ib.*

APPENDIX TO INTRODUCTION

A.

Epitaph on Burke from Goldsmith's *Retaliation* (1774). [Note the brevity, wit and accuracy of characterization.]

Here lies our good Edmund, whose genius was such,
We scarcely can praise it or blame it too much;
Who, born for the universe, narrowed his mind,
And to party gave up what was meant for mankind;
Though fraught with all learning, yet straining his throat
To persuade Tommy Townshend to lend him a vote;
Who, too deep for his hearers, still went on refining,
And thought of convincing, while they thought of dining;
Though equal to all things, for all things unfit;
Too nice for a statesman, too proud for a wit;
For a patriot, too cool; for a drudge, disobedient;
And too fond of the *right* to pursue the *expedient.*
In short, 'twas his fate, unemployed or in place, sir,
To eat mutton cold, and cut blocks with a razor.

B.

The Middlesex Petition (1769).

[The petition, which was signed by 1565 freeholders, admirably sums up their grievances from their point of view and contains valuable illustrations for many passages in *The Present Discontents*.]

To the King's most Excellent Majesty.

The humble petition of the Freeholders of the County of Middlesex.

MOST GRACIOUS SOVEREIGN,

We, your Majesty's dutiful and loyal subjects, the Freeholders of the County of Middlesex, beg leave with all affectionate submission and humility, to throw ourselves at your royal feet, and humbly to implore your paternal attention to those grievances of which this county and the whole nation complain, and those fearful apprehensions with which the whole British Empire is most justly alarmed.

With great grief and sorrow we have long beheld the endeavours of certain evil-minded persons, who attempt to infuse into your royal mind notions and opinions of the most dangerous and pernicious tendency, and who promote and counsel such measures as cannot fail to destroy that harmony and confidence which should ever subsist between a just and virtuous prince and a free and loyal people.

For this disaffected purpose they have introduced into every part of the administration of our happy legal constitution a certain unlimited and indefinite discretionary power, to prevent which is the sole aim of all our laws, and was the sole cause of all those disturbances and revolutions which formerly distracted this unhappy country; for our ancestors, by their own fatal experience, well knew that in a state where discretion begins, law, liberty, and safety end. Under the pretence of this discretion, or, as it was formerly, and has been lately, called, Law of state, we have seen

English subjects, and even a member of the British Legislature, arrested by virtue of a general warrant issued by a secretary of state, contrary to the law of the land ;

Their houses rifled and plundered, their papers seized, and used as evidence upon trial ;

Their bodies committed to close imprisonment ;

The Habeas Corpus eluded ;

Trial by jury discountenanced, and the first law officer of the crown publicly insinuating that juries are not to be trusted ;

Printers punished by the ministry in the supreme court without a trial by their equals, without any trial at all ;

The remedy of the law for false imprisonment debarred and defeated ;

The plaintiff and his attorney, for their appeal to the law of the land, punished by expenses and imprisonment, and made, by forced engagements, to desist from their legal claim ;

A writing determined to be a libel by a court where it was not cognizable in the first instance ; contrary to law, because an appeal is thereby cut off, and inferior courts and juries influenced by such predetermination ;

A person condemned in the said courts as the author of the supposed libel, unheard, without defence or trial ;

Unjust treatment of petitions, by selecting only such parts as might be wrested to criminate the petitioner, and refusing to hear those which might procure him redress ;

The thanks of one branch of the Legislature proposed by a minister to be given to an acknowledged offender for his offence, with the declared intention of screening him from the law ;

Attachments wrested from their original intent of removing obstructions to the proceedings of law, to punish by sentence of arbitrary fine and imprisonment, without trial or appeal, supposed offences committed out of court ;

Perpetual imprisonment of an Englishman without trial, conviction, or sentence, by the same mode of attachment,

wherein the same person is at once party, accuser, judge, and jury;

Instead of the ancient and legal civil police, the military introduced at every opportunity, unnecessarily and unlawfully patrolling the streets, to the alarm and terror of the inhabitants;

The lives of many of your Majesty's innocent subjects destroyed by military execution;

Such military execution solemnly adjudged to be legal;

Murder abetted, encouraged, and rewarded;

The civil magistracy rendered contemptible by the appointment of improper and incapable persons;

The civil magistrates tampered with by administration, and neglecting and refusing to discharge their duty;

Mobs and riots hired and raised by the ministry, in order to justify and recommend their own illegal proceedings, and to prejudice your Majesty's mind by false insinuations against the loyalty of your Majesty's subjects;

The freedom of election violated by corrupt and undue influence, by unpunished violence and murder;

The just verdicts of juries and the opinion of the judges overruled by false representations to your Majesty; and the determinations of the law set aside, by new, unprecedented, and dangerous means; thereby leaving the guilty without restraint, and the injured without redress, and the lives of your Majesty's subjects at the mercy of every ruffian protected by administration;

Obsolete and vexatious claims of the crown set on foot for partial and election purposes;

Partial attacks on the liberty of the press, the most daring and pernicious libels against the constitution and against the liberty of the subject being allowed to pass unnoticed, whilst the slightest libel against a minister is punished with the utmost rigour;

Wicked attempts to increase and establish a standing army, by endeavouring to vest in the crown an unlimited power over the militia, which, should they succeed, must,

sooner or later, subvert the constitution, by augmenting the power of administration in proportion to their delinquency ;

Repeated endeavours to diminish the importance of members of parliament individually, in order to render them more dependent on administration collectively. Even threats having been employed by ministers to suppress the freedom of debate; and the wrath of parliament denounced against measures authorized by the law of the land ;

Resolutions of one branch of the legislature set up as the law of the land, being a direct usurpation of the rights of the two other branches, and therefore a manifest infringement of the constitution ;

Public money shamefully squandered and unaccounted for, and all inquiry into the cause of arrears in the civil list prevented by the ministry ;

Inquiry into a paymaster's public accounts stopped in the exchequer, though the sums accounted for by that paymaster amount to above forty millions sterling ;

Public loans perverted to private ministerial purposes ;

Prostitution of public honours and rewards to men who can neither plead public virtue nor services ;

Irreligion and immorality, so eminently discountenanced by your Majesty's royal example, encouraged by administration, both by example and precept ;

The same discretion has been extended by the same evil counsellors to your Majesty's dominions in America, and has produced to our suffering fellow-subjects in that part of the world grievances and apprehensions similar to those which we complain of at home.

Most Gracious Sovereign,

Such are the grievances and apprehensions which have long discontented and disturbed the greatest and best part of your Majesty's loyal subjects. Unwilling, however, to interrupt your royal repose, though ready to lay down our lives and fortunes for your Majesty's service, and for the constitution as by law established, we have waited patiently,

expecting a constitutional remedy by the means of our own representatives, but our legal and free choice having been repeatedly rejected, and the right of election now finally taken from us by the unprecedented seating of a candidate who was never chosen by the county, and who, even to become a candidate, was obliged fraudulently to vacate his seat in parliament, under the pretence of an insignificant place, invited thereto by the prior declaration of a minister, that whoever opposed our choice, though but with four votes, should be declared member for the county. We see ourselves, by this last act, deprived even of the franchises of Englishmen, reduced to the most abject state of slavery, and left without hopes or means of redress but from your Majesty or God.

Deign then, most gracious Sovereign, to listen to the prayer of the most faithful of your Majesty's subjects; and to banish from your royal favour, trust, and confidence, for ever, those evil and pernicious counsellors who have endeavoured to alienate the affection of your Majesty's most sincere and dutiful subjects, and whose suggestions tend to deprive your people of their dearest and most essential rights, and who have traitorously dared to depart from the spirit and letter of those laws which have secured the crown of these realms to the House of Brunswick, in which we make our most earnest prayers to God that it may continue untarnished to the latest posterity

CHRONOLOGICAL TABLE

Burke's Life.	*Contemporary Events.*
1729 Burke born in Dublin.	1731 Churchill born.
	1732 Pope's *Essay on Man.*
	1736 Porteous Riots in Edinburgh.
	1737 Gibbon born.
	Frederick Prince of Wales heads opposition to Walpole, and quarrels with George II.
	1738 Johnson's *London.*
	Wesley begins his great revival.
	1739 War with Spain.
	1740 Richardson's *Pamela.*
1741 Sent to school at Ballitore.	1741 Garrick first appears as an actor.
	1742 Walpole's resignation.
	Fielding's *Joseph Andrews.*
	Dunciad (Final issue).
1743 Enters Trinity College, Dublin.	
	1744 Pelham becomes Prime Minister.
	Pope dies.
	1745 Jacobite Rebellion.
	1747 Garrick begins his career at Drury Lane.
1748 Graduates B.A.	1748 Peace of Aix-la-Chapelle.
	Richardson's *Clarissa Harlowe.*
	1749 Fielding's *Tom Jones.*

Burke's Life.	*Contemporary Events.*
	1749 Johnson's *Vanity of Human Wishes.*
	Bolingbroke's *Patriot King.*
1750 Comes to London to study law.	
	1751 Frederick Prince of Wales dies.
	Earl of Bute become Groom of the Stole to Prince George.
	Bolingbroke dies.
	1752 New Style of Calendar introduced.
	1754 Fielding dies.
	Pelham dies and Newcastle becomes Prime Minister.
	1755 First edition of Johnson's *Dictionary.*
1756 *A Vindication of Natural Society.*	
The Sublime and Beautiful.	
Marriage.	
	1757 Byng executed.
	Pitt Secretary of State.
	Plassey.
	1758 Fort Duquesne captured.
1759 Begins *Annual Register.*	1759 Quebec.
	Brindley begins his canals.
	1760 Accession of George III.
1761 Goes to Ireland with "Single-speech" Hamilton.	1761 Richardson dies.
	Bute Secretary of State.
	Pitt resigns.
	1762 Bute becomes Prime Minister.
	Dr Johnson receives a pension.
	Goldsmith's *Citizen of the World.*
	This year the secret service money amounts to £82,000, a rise of £24,000.

Burke's Life.	*Contemporary Events.*
	1762 *The Briton* in support of Bute is edited by Smollett.
	The North Briton, opposing Bute, is edited by Wilkes.
	1763 Churchill's *Prophecy of Famine.*
	Peace of Paris.
	Bute resigns and is succeeded by Grenville.
	Wilkes prosecuted, under a general warrant, for No. 45 of the *North Briton.*
	Boswell introduced to Johnson.
1764 "The Club": among the original members are Dr Johnson, Burke, Reynolds, Goldsmith. Other early members are Garrick, Gibbon, Adam Smith.	1764 *The Traveller.*
	Churchill dies.
	Wilkes expelled from House of Commons.
	Riots in his favour.
	1764—76 Many inventions in cotton-manufacturing.
1765 Secretary to Rockingham. M.P. for Wendover.	1765 Stamp Act for the American Colonies.
	Rockingham becomes Prime Minister.
	Percy's *Reliques.*
1766 First speech in House of Commons.	1766 Goldsmith's *Vicar of Wakefield.*
	Stamp Act repealed.
	General warrants condemned by Commons.
	Fall of Rockingham ministry.
	Pitt's ministry with Grafton as Prime Minister.
	Pitt becomes Earl of Chatham.
	1767 Townshend's Act imposing duties on imports into America.
	1768 Wilkes elected for Middlesex.

Burke's Life.	*Contemporary Events.*
	1768 Riots in favour of Wilkes, who is imprisoned for former libels.
	Corsica becomes French.
	Chatham leaves the ministry.
1769 *Observations on the Present State of the Nation.*	1769 "Junius" begins his letters in the *Public Advertiser.*
Fierce attacks in House of Commons on ministry.	Wilkes elected other three times for Middlesex; but Luttrell, defeated candidate the fourth time, is declared to be the representative.
	General boycott of British goods in America.
	Reynolds begins his *Discourses.*
	James Watt patents his invention of steam condenser.
1770 *The Present Discontents.*	1770 Grafton resigns and is succeeded by North.
	American import duties removed except that on tea.
	Goldsmith's *Deserted Village.*
1771 Agent for New York province.	1771 Commons attempt to stop publication of debates.
1772 Attacked by pamphleteers as supposed writer of *Letters of Junius.*	
1773 Visits Paris.	1773 Boston "Tea Party."
	Johnson and Boswell in Scotland.
1774 *Speech on American Taxation.*	1774 Wilkes allowed to take his seat for Middlesex.
M.P. for Bristol.	Goldsmith dies.
	Goldsmith's *Retaliation.*
	Warren Hastings Governor-General of India.
1775 *Speech on Conciliation with America.*	1775 War with American Colonies.
	Johnson's *Journey to the Western Islands.*

Burke's Life.	*Contemporary Events.*
	1776 Declaration of American Independence. Gibbon's *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire.* Adam Smith's *Wealth of Nations.* Garrick retires.
1777 *Letter to the Sheriffs of Bristol.*	
1778 Motions in regard to Irish Trade and for relief of Catholics. Speech on employment of Indians against Americans.	1778 Chatham dies. France recognizes American Independence. Concessions to Catholics.
	1779 Spain declares war on Britain. Johnson's *Lives of the Poets.* Garrick dies.
1780 Proposes Economical Reform.	1780 Lord George Gordon Riots.
1781 M.P. for Malton. Economical Reform.	
1782 Paymaster of the Forces.	1782 Rockingham Prime Minister. Civil List reformed, pensions restricted, sinecures (worth £72,000) abolished. Revenue officers debarred from voting at elections. Proceedings in connexion with Wilkes's election for Middlesex expunged. American Independence acknowledged. Irish Parliament becomes independent.
1783 Paymaster of the Forces. Busy with affairs of the East India Company.	1783 Coalition Ministry under Portland. Treaty of Versailles. Fox's India Bill thrown out by Lords. Cartwright's power-loom. Pitt Prime Minister.

Burke's Life.	*Contemporary Events.*
1784 Lord Rector of Glasgow University.	1784 Death of Johnson.
1785 Travels in Scotland.	
1786 Moves impeachment of Hastings.	
1788 Opening speech in impeachment trial of Hastings.	
1789 Joins Wilberforce against Slave Trade.	1789 French Revolution. Bastille stormed.
1790 *Reflections on the Revolution.*	
1791 Quarrel with Fox and Sheridan.	1791 Boswell's *Johnson.*
	1792 Death of Reynolds.
	1793 Execution of Louis XVI. The Reign of Terror.
1794 Nine days' speech in reply to defence of Warren Hastings. Retires from Parliament. Pension from ministry.	
1795 *Letter to a Noble Lord.*	1795 Acquittal of Warren Hastings.
1796 *Letters on a Regicide Peace.*	
1797 Burke dies.	

THOUGHTS

ON

THE CAUSE OF THE PRESENT

DISCONTENTS

It is an undertaking of some degree of delicacy to examine into the cause of publick disorders. If a man happens not to succeed in such an inquiry, he will be thought weak and visionary; if he touches the true grievance, there is a danger that he may come near to persons of weight and consequence, who will rather be exasperated at the discovery of their errours, than thankful for the occasion of correcting them. If he should be obliged to blame the favourites of the people, he will be considered as the tool of power; if he censures those in power, he will be looked on as an instrument of faction. But in all exertions of duty something is to be hazarded. In cases of tumult and disorder, our law has invested every man, in some sort, with the authority of a magistrate. When the affairs of the nation are distracted, private people are, by the spirit of that law, justified in stepping a little out of their ordinary sphere. They enjoy a privilege, of somewhat more dignity and effect, than that of idle lamentation over the calamities of their

country. They may look into them narrowly; they may reason upon them liberally; and if they should be so fortunate as to discover the true source of the mischief, and to suggest any probable method of removing it, though they may displease the rulers for the day, they are certainly of service to the cause of government. Government is deeply interested in every thing which, even through the medium of some temporary uneasiness, may tend finally to compose the minds of the subject, and to conciliate their affections. I have nothing to do here with the abstract value of the voice of the people. But as long as reputation, the most precious possession of every individual, and as long as opinion, the great support of the state, depend entirely upon that voice, it can never be considered as a thing of little consequence either to individuals or to government. Nations are not primarily ruled by laws; less by violence. Whatever original energy may be supposed either in force or regulation, the operation of both is, in truth, merely instrumental. Nations are governed by the same methods, and on the same principles, by which an individual without authority is often able to govern those who are his equals or his superiours; by a knowledge of their temper, and by a judicious management of it; I mean, —when publick affairs are steadily and quietly conducted; not when government is nothing but a continued scuffle between the magistrate and the multitude; in which sometimes the one and sometimes the other is uppermost; in which they alternately yield and prevail, in a series of contemptible victories, and scandalous submissions. The temper of the people amongst whom he presides ought therefore to be the first study of a statesman.

And the knowledge of this temper it is by no means impossible for him to attain, if he has not an interest in being ignorant of what it is his duty to learn.

To complain of the age we live in, to murmur at the present possessors of power, to lament the past, to conceive extravagant hopes of the future, are the common dispositions of the greatest part of mankind; indeed the necessary effects of the ignorance and levity of the vulgar. Such complaints and humours have existed in all times; yet as all times have *not* been alike, true political sagacity manifests itself in distinguishing that complaint which only characterises the general infirmity of human nature, from those which are symptoms of the particular distemperature of our own air and season.

Nobody, I believe, will consider it merely as the language of spleen or disappointment, if I say, that there is something particularly alarming in the present conjuncture. There is hardly a man, in or out of power, who holds any other language. That government is at once dreaded and contemned; that the laws are despoiled of all their respected and salutary terrours; that their inaction is a subject of ridicule, and their exertion of abhorrence; that rank, and office, and title, and all the solemn plausibilities of the world, have lost their reverence and effect; that our foreign politicks are as much deranged as our domestick economy; that our dependencies are slackened in their affection, and loosened from their obedience; that we know neither how to yield nor how to enforce; that hardly any thing above or below, abroad or at home, is sound and entire; but that disconnexion and confusion, in offices, in parties, in families, in parliament in the nation, prevail beyond the disorders of any

former time: these are facts universally admitted and lamented.

This state of things is the more extraordinary, because the great parties which formerly divided and agitated the kingdom are known to be in a manner entirely dissolved. No great external calamity has visited the nation; no pestilence or famine. We do not labour at present under any scheme of taxation new or oppressive in the quantity or in the mode. Nor are we engaged in unsuccessful war; in which, our misfortunes might easily pervert our judgment; and our minds, sore from the loss of national glory, might feel every blow of fortune as a crime in government.

It is impossible that the cause of this strange distemper should not sometimes become a subject of discourse. It is a compliment due, and which I willingly pay, to those who administer our affairs, to take notice in the first place of their speculation. Our ministers are of opinion, that the increase of our trade and manufactures, that our growth by colonization, and by conquest, have concurred to accumulate immense wealth in the hands of some individuals; and this again being dispersed among the people, has rendered them universally proud, ferocious, and ungovernable; that the insolence of some from their enormous wealth, and the boldness of others from a guilty poverty, have rendered them capable of the most atrocious attempts; so that they have trampled upon all subordination, and violently borne down the unarmed laws of a free government; barriers too feeble against the fury of a populace so fierce and licentious as ours. They contend, that no adequate provocation has been given for so spreading a discontent; our affairs having

been conducted throughout with remarkable temper and consummate wisdom. The wicked industry of some libellers, joined to the intrigues of a few disappointed politicians, have, in their opinion, been able to produce this unnatural ferment in the nation.

Nothing indeed can be more unnatural than the present convulsions of this country, if the above account be a true one. I confess I shall assent to it with great reluctance, and only on the compulsion of the clearest and firmest proofs; because their account resolves itself into this short but discouraging proposition, "That we have a very good ministry, but that we are a very bad people"; that we set ourselves to bite the hand that feeds us; that with a malignant insanity we oppose the measures, and ungratefully vilify the persons, of those whose sole object is our own peace and prosperity. If a few puny libellers, acting under a knot of factious politicians, without virtue, parts, or character, (such they are constantly represented by these gentlemen) are sufficient to excite this disturbance, very perverse must be the disposition of that people, amongst whom such a disturbance can be excited by such means. It is besides no small aggravation of the publick misfortune, that the disease, on this hypothesis, appears to be without remedy. If the wealth of the nation be the cause of its turbulence, I imagine it is not proposed to introduce poverty, as a constable to keep the peace. If our dominions abroad are the roots which feed all this rank luxuriance of sedition, it is not intended to cut them off in order to famish the fruit. If our liberty has enfeebled the executive power, there is no design, I hope, to call in the aid of despotism, to fill up the deficiencies of law.

Whatever may be intended, these things are not yet professed. We seem therefore to be driven to absolute despair; for we have no other materials to work upon, but those out of which God has been pleased to form the inhabitants of this island. If these be radically and essentially vicious, all that can be said is, that those men are very unhappy, to whose fortune or duty it falls to administer the affairs of this untoward people. I hear it indeed sometimes asserted, that a steady perseverance in the present measures, and a rigorous punishment of those who oppose them, will in course of time infallibly put an end to these disorders. But this, in my opinion, is said without much observation of our present disposition, and without any knowledge at all of the general nature of mankind. If the matter of which this nation is composed be so very fermentable as these gentlemen describe it, leaven never will be wanting to work it up, as long as discontent, revenge, and ambition, have existence in the world. Particular punishments are the cure for accidental distempers in the state; they inflame rather than allay those heats which arise from the settled mismanagement of the government, or from a natural ill disposition in the people. It is of the utmost moment not to make mistakes in the use of strong measures: and firmness is then only a virtue when it accompanies the most perfect wisdom. In truth, inconstancy is a sort of natural corrective of folly and ignorance.

I am not one of those who think that the people are never in the wrong. They have been so, frequently and outrageously, both in other countries and in this. But I do say, that in all disputes between them and their rulers, the presumption is at least upon a par in favour of

the people. Experience may perhaps justify me in going farther. When popular discontents have been very prevalent, it may well be affirmed and supported, that there has been generally something found amiss in the constitution, or in the conduct of government. The people have no interest in disorder. When they do wrong, it is their errour, and not their crime. But with the governing part of the state, it is far otherwise. They certainly may act ill by design, as well as by mistake. "*Les révolutions qui arrivent dans les grands états ne sont point un effect du hazard, ni du caprice des peuples. Rien ne révolte* les grands *d'un royaume comme* un gouvernement foible et dérangé. *Pour la* populace, *ce n'est jamais par envie d'attaquer qu'elle se soulève, mais par impatience de souffrir**." These are the words of a great man; of a minister of state; and a zealous assertor of monarchy. They are applied to the *system of favouritism* which was adopted by Henry the Third of France, and to the dreadful consequences it produced. What he says of revolutions, is equally true of all great disturbances. If this presumption in favour of the subjects against the trustees of power be not the more probable, I am sure it is the more comfortable speculation; because it is more easy to change an administration, than to reform a people.

Upon a supposition, therefore, that, in the opening of the cause, the presumptions stand equally balanced between the parties, there seems sufficient ground to entitle any person to a fair hearing, who attempts some other scheme beside that easy one which is fashionable in some fashionable companies, to account for the present

* *Mém. de Sully*, Tom. i. p. 133.

discontents. It is not to be argued that we endure no grievance, because our grievances are not of the same sort with those under which we laboured formerly; not precisely those which we bore from the Tudors, or vindicated on the Stuarts. A great change has taken place in the affairs of this country. For in the silent lapse of events as material alterations have been insensibly brought about in the policy and character of governments and nations, as those which have been marked by the tumult of publick revolutions.

It is very rare indeed for men to be wrong in their feelings concerning publick misconduct; as rare to be right in their speculation upon the cause of it. I have constantly observed, that the generality of people are fifty years, at least, behindhand in their politicks. There are but very few, who are capable of comparing and digesting what passes before their eyes at different times and occasions, so as to form the whole into a distinct system. But in books every thing is settled for them, without the exertion of any considerable diligence or sagacity. For which reason men are wise with but little reflection, and good with little self-denial, in the business of all times except their own. We are very uncorrupt and tolerably enlightened judges of the transactions of past ages; where no passions deceive, and where the whole train of circumstances, from the trifling cause to the tragical event, is set in an orderly series before us. Few are the partisans of departed tyranny; and to be a Whig on the business of an hundred years ago, is very consistent with every advantage of present servility. This retrospective wisdom, and historical patriotism, are things of wonderful convenience: and serve admirably to

reconcile the old quarrel between speculation and practice. Many a stern republican, after gorging himself with a full feast of admiration of the Grecian commonwealths and of our true Saxon constitution, and discharging all the splendid bile of his virtuous indignation on King John and King James, sits down perfectly satisfied to the coarsest work and homeliest job of the day he lives in. I believe there was no professed admirer of Henry the Eighth among the instruments of the last King James; nor in the court of Henry the Eighth, was there, I dare say, to be found a single advocate for the favourites of Richard the Second.

No complaisance to our court, or to our age, can make me believe nature to be so changed, but that publick liberty will be among us, as among our ancestors, obnoxious to some person or other; and that opportunities will be furnished for attempting, at least, some alteration to the prejudice of our constitution. These attempts will naturally vary in their mode, according to times and circumstances. For ambition, though it has ever the same general views, has not at all times the same means, nor the same particular objects. A great deal of the furniture of ancient tyranny is worn to rags; the rest is entirely out of fashion. Besides, there are few statesmen so very clumsy and awkward in their business, as to fall into the identical snare which has proved fatal to their predecessors. When an arbitrary imposition is attempted upon the subject, undoubtedly it will not bear on its forehead the name of *Ship-money*. There is no danger that an extension of the *Forest laws* should be the chosen mode of oppression in this age. And when we hear any instance of ministerial rapacity, to the

prejudice of the rights of private life, it will certainly not be the exaction of two hundred pullets, from a woman of fashion, for leave to lie with her own husband*.

Every age has its own manners, and its politicks dependent upon them; and the same attempts will not be made against a constitution fully formed and matured, that were used to destroy it in the cradle, or to resist its growth during its infancy.

Against the being of parliament, I am satisfied, no designs have ever been entertained since the revolution. Every one must perceive, that it is strongly the interest of the court, to have some second cause interposed between the ministers and the people. The gentlemen of the house of commons have an interest equally strong, in sustaining the part of that intermediate cause. However they may hire out the *usufruct* of their voices, they never will part with the *fee and inheritance*. Accordingly those who have been of the most known devotion to the will and pleasure of a court, have, at the same time, been most forward in asserting a high authority in the house of commons. When they knew who were to use that authority, and how it was to be employed, they thought it never could be carried too far. It must be always the wish of an unconstitutional statesman, that a house of commons, who are entirely dependent upon him, should have every right of the people entirely dependent upon their pleasure. It was soon discovered, that the forms of a free, and the ends of an arbitrary government, were things not altogether incompatible.

* "Uxor Hugonis de Nevill dat Domino Regi ducentas gallinas, eo quod possit jacere una nocte cum Domino suo Hugone de Nevill." Maddox, *Hist. Exch.* c. xiii. p. 326.

The power of the crown, almost dead and rotten as Prerogative, has grown up anew, with much more strength, and far less odium, under the name of Influence. An influence, which operated without noise and without violence; an influence, which converted the very antagonist, into the instrument, of power; which contained in itself a perpetual principle of growth and renovation; and which the distresses and the prosperity of the country equally tended to augment, was an admirable substitute for a prerogative, that, being only the offspring of antiquated prejudices, had moulded into its original stamina irresistible principles of decay and dissolution. The ignorance of the people is a bottom but for a temporary system; the interest of active men in the state is a foundation perpetual and infallible. However, some circumstances, arising, it must be confessed, in a great degree from accident, prevented the effects of this influence for a long time from breaking out in a manner capable of exciting any serious apprehensions. Although government was strong and flourished exceedingly, the *court* had drawn far less advantage than one would imagine from this great source of power.

At the Revolution, the crown, deprived, for the ends of the revolution itself, of many prerogatives, was found too weak to struggle against all the difficulties which pressed so new and unsettled a government. The court was obliged therefore to delegate a part of its powers to men of such interest as could support, and of such fidelity as would adhere to, its establishment. Such men were able to draw in a greater number to a concurrence in the common defence. This connexion, necessary at first, continued long after convenient; and properly

conducted might indeed, in all situations, be an useful instrument of government. At the same time, through the intervention of men of popular weight and character, the people possessed a security for their just proportion of importance in the state. But as the title to the crown grew stronger by long possession, and by the constant increase of its influence, these helps have of late seemed to certain persons no better than incumbrances. The powerful managers for government were not sufficiently submissive to the pleasure of the possessors of immediate and personal favour, sometimes from a confidence in their own strength natural and acquired; sometimes from a fear of offending their friends, and weakening that lead in the country, which gave them a consideration independent of the court. Men acted as if the court could receive, as well as confer, an obligation. The influence of government, thus divided in appearance between the court and the leaders of parties, became in many cases an accession rather to the popular than to the royal scale; and some part of that influence, which would otherwise have been possessed as in a sort of mortmain and unalienable domain, returned again to the great ocean from whence it arose, and circulated among the people. This method, therefore, of governing by men of great natural interest or great acquired consideration was viewed in a very invidious light by the true lovers of absolute monarchy. It is the nature of despotism to abhor power held by any means but its own momentary pleasure; and to annihilate all intermediate situations between boundless strength on its own part, and total debility on the part of the people.

To get rid of all this intermediate and independent

importance, and *to secure to the court the unlimited and uncontrouled use of its own vast influence, under the sole direction of its own private favour*, has for some years past been the great object of policy. If this were compassed, the influence of the crown must of course produce all the effects which the most sanguine partisans of the court could possibly desire. Government might then be carried on without any concurrence on the part of the people; without any attention to the dignity of the greater, or to the affections of the lower sorts. A new project was therefore devised by a certain set of intriguing men, totally different from the system of administration which had prevailed since the accession of the House of Brunswick. This project, I have heard, was first conceived by some persons in the court of Frederick Prince of Wales.

The earliest attempt in the execution of this design was to set up for minister, a person, in rank indeed respectable, and very ample in fortune; but who, to the moment of this vast and sudden elevation, was little known or considered in the kingdom. To him the whole nation was to yield an immediate and implicit submission. But whether it was from want of firmness to bear up against the first opposition; or that things were not yet fully ripened, or that this method was not found the most eligible; that idea was soon abandoned. The instrumental part of the project was a little altered, to accommodate it to the time, and to bring things more gradually and more surely to the one great end proposed.

The first part of the reformed plan was to draw *a line which should separate the court from the ministry*. Hitherto these names had been looked upon as

synonymous; but for the future, court and administration were to be considered as things totally distinct. By this operation, two systems of administration were to be formed; one which should be in the real secret and confidence; the other merely ostensible, to perform the official and executory duties of government. The latter were alone to be responsible; whilst the real advisers, who enjoyed all the power, were effectually removed from all the danger.

Secondly, *A party under these leaders was to be formed in favour of the court against the ministry:* this party was to have a large share in the emoluments of government, and to hold it totally separate from, and independent of, ostensible administration.

The third point, and that on which the success of the whole scheme ultimately depended, was *to bring parliament to an acquiescence in this project.* Parliament was therefore to be taught by degrees a total indifference to the persons, rank, influence, abilities, connexions, and character of the ministers of the crown. By means of a discipline, on which I shall say more hereafter, that body was to be habituated to the most opposite interests, and the most discordant politicks. All connexions and dependencies among subjects were to be entirely dissolved. As, hitherto, business had gone through the hands of leaders of Whigs or Tories, men of talents to conciliate the people, and to engage their confidence; now the method was to be altered: and the lead was to be given to men of no sort of consideration or credit in the country. This want of natural importance was to be their very title to delegated power. Members of parliament were to be hardened into an insensibility to

pride as well as to duty. Those high and haughty sentiments, which are the great support of independence, were to be let down gradually. Points of honour and precedence were no more to be regarded in parliamentary decorum, than in a Turkish army. It was to be avowed, as a constitutional maxim, that the king might appoint one of his footmen, or one of your footmen, for minister; and that he ought to be, and that he would be, as well followed as the first name for rank or wisdom in the nation. Thus parliament was to look on, as if perfectly unconcerned, while a cabal of the closet and back-stairs was substituted in the place of a national administration.

With such a degree of acquiescence, any measure of any court might well be deemed thoroughly secure. The capital objects, and by much the most flattering characteristicks of arbitrary power, would be obtained. Every thing would be drawn from its holdings in the country to the personal favour and inclination of the prince. This favour would be the sole introduction to power, and the only tenure by which it was to be held: so that no person looking towards another, and all looking towards the court, it was impossible but that the motive which solely influenced every man's hopes must come in time to govern every man's conduct; till at last the servility became universal, in spite of the dead letter of any laws or institutions whatsoever.

How it should happen that any man could be tempted to venture upon such a project of government, may at first view appear surprising. But the fact is, that opportunities very inviting to such an attempt have offered; and the scheme itself was not destitute of some arguments, not wholly unplausible, to recommend it. These opportunities

and these arguments, the use that has been made of both, the plan for carrying this new scheme of government into execution, and the effects which it has produced, are in my opinion worthy of our serious consideration.

His Majesty came to the throne of these kingdoms with more advantages than any of his predecessors since the Revolution. Fourth in descent, and third in succession of his royal family, even the zealots of hereditary right, in him, saw something to flatter their favourite prejudices; and to justify a transfer of their attachments, without a change in their principles. The person and cause of the Pretender were become contemptible; his title disowned throughout Europe; his party disbanded in England. His majesty came indeed to the inheritance of a mighty war; but, victorious in every part of the globe, peace was always in his power, not to negotiate, but to dictate. No foreign habitudes or attachments withdrew him from the cultivation of his power at home. His revenue for the civil establishment, fixed (as it was then thought) at a large, but definite sum, was ample without being invidious. His influence, by additions from conquest, by an augmentation of debt, by an increase of military and naval establishment, much strengthened and extended. And coming to the throne in the prime and full vigour of youth, as from affection there was a strong dislike, so from dread there seemed to be a general averseness, from giving any thing like offence to a monarch, against whose resentment opposition could not look for a refuge in any sort of reversionary hope.

These singular advantages inspired his majesty only with a more ardent desire to preserve unimpaired the

spirit of that national freedom, to which he owed a situation so full of glory. But to others it suggested sentiments of a very different nature. They thought they now beheld an opportunity (by a certain sort of statesmen never long undiscovered or unemployed) of drawing to themselves, by the aggrandizement of a court faction, a degree of power which they could never hope to derive from natural influence or from honourable service; and which it was impossible they could hold with the least security, whilst the system of administration rested upon its former bottom. In order to facilitate the execution of their design, it was necessary to make many alterations in political arrangement, and a signal change in the opinions, habits, and connexions of the greatest part of those who at that time acted in publick.

In the first place, they proceeded gradually, but not slowly, to destroy every thing of strength which did not derive its principal nourishment from the immediate pleasure of the court. The greatest weight of popular opinion and party connexion were then with the duke of Newcastle and Mr Pitt. Neither of these held their importance by the *new tenure* of the court; they were not therefore thought to be so proper as others for the services which were required by that tenure. It happened very favourably for the new system, that under a forced coalition there rankled an incurable alienation and disgust between the parties which composed the administration. Mr Pitt was first attacked. Not satisfied with removing him from power, they endeavoured by various artifices to ruin his character. The other party seemed rather pleased to get rid of so oppressive a support; not perceiving, that their own fall was prepared by his, and

involved in it. Many other reasons prevented them from daring to look their true situation in the face. To the great Whig families it was extremely disagreeable, and seemed almost unnatural, to oppose the administration of a prince of the house of Brunswick. Day after day they hesitated, and doubted, and lingered, expecting that other counsels would take place; and were slow to be persuaded, that all which had been done by the cabal was the effect not of humour, but of system. It was more strongly and evidently the interest of the new court faction, to get rid of the great Whig connexions, than to destroy Mr Pitt. The power of that gentleman was vast indeed and merited; but it was in a great degree personal, and therefore transient. Theirs was rooted in the country. For, with a good deal less of popularity, they possessed a far more natural and fixed influence. Long possession of government; vast property; obligations of favours given and received; connexion of office; ties of blood, of alliance, of friendship (things at that time supposed of some force); the name of Whig, dear to the majority of the people; the zeal early begun and steadily continued to the royal family: all these together formed a body of power in the nation, which was criminal and devoted. The great ruling principle of the cabal, and that which animated and harmonized all their proceedings, how various soever they may have been, was to signify to the world, that the court would proceed upon its own proper forces only; and that the pretence of bringing any other into its service was an affront to it, and not a support. Therefore when the chiefs were removed, in order to go to the root, the whole party was put under a proscription, so general and severe as to take their hard-earned bread

from the lowest officers, in a manner which had never been known before, even in general revolutions. But it was thought necessary effectually to destroy all dependencies but one; and to shew an example of the firmness and rigour with which the new system was to be supported.

Thus for the time were pulled down, in the persons of the Whig leaders and of Mr Pitt (in spite of the services of the one at the accession of the royal family, and the recent services of the other in the war) the *two only securities for the importance of the people; power arising from popularity; and power arising from connexion.* Here and there indeed a few individuals were left standing, who gave security for their total estrangement from the odious principles of party connexion and personal attachment; and it must be confessed that most of them have religiously kept their faith. Such a change could not however be made without a mighty shock to government.

To reconcile the minds of the people to all these movements, principles correspondent to them had been preached up with great zeal. Every one must remember that the cabal set out with the most astonishing prudery, both moral and political. Those, who in a few months after soused over head and ears into the deepest and dirtiest pits of corruption, cried out violently against the indirect practices in the electing and managing of parliaments, which had formerly prevailed. This marvellous abhorrence which the court had suddenly taken to all influence, was not only circulated in conversation through the kingdom, but pompously announced to the publick, with many other extraordinary things, in a pamphlet*

* *Sentiments of an honest Man.*

which had all the appearance of a manifesto preparatory to some considerable enterprise. Throughout it was a satire, though in terms managed and decent enough, on the politicks of the former reign. It was indeed written with no small art and address.

In this piece appeared the first dawning of the new system; there first appeared the idea (then only in speculation) of *separating the court from the administration*; of carrying every thing from national connexion to personal regards; and of forming a regular party for that purpose, under the name of *king's men*.

To recommend this system to the people, a perspective view of the court, gorgeously painted, and finely illuminated from within, was exhibited to the gaping multitude. Party was to be totally done away, with all its evil works. Corruption was to be cast down from court, as *Até* was from heaven. Power was thenceforward to be the chosen residence of publick spirit; and no one was to be supposed under any sinister influence, except those who had the misfortune to be in disgrace at court, which was to stand in lieu of all vices and all corruptions. A scheme of perfection to be realized in a monarchy far beyond the visionary republick of Plato. The whole scenery was exactly disposed to captivate those good souls, whose credulous morality is so invaluable a treasure to crafty politicians. Indeed there was wherewithal to charm every body, except those few who are not much pleased with professions of supernatural virtue, who know of what stuff such professions are made, for what purposes they are designed, and in what they are sure constantly to end. Many innocent gentlemen, who had been talking prose all their lives without knowing any thing of the

matter, began at last to open their eyes upon their own merits, and to attribute their not having been lords of the treasury and lords of trade many years before, merely to the prevalence of party, and to the ministerial power, which had frustrated the good intentions of the court in favour of their abilities. Now was the time to unlock the sealed fountain of royal bounty, which had been infamously monopolized and huckstered, and to let it flow at large upon the whole people. The time was come, to restore royalty to its original splendour. *Mettre le Roy hors de page*, became a sort of watchword. And it was constantly in the mouths of all the runners of the court, that nothing could preserve the balance of the constitution from being overturned by the rabble, or by a faction of the nobility, but to free the sovereign effectually from that ministerial tyranny under which the royal dignity had been oppressed in the person of his majesty's grandfather.

These were some of the many artifices used to reconcile the people to the great change which was made in the persons who composed the ministry, and the still greater which was made and avowed in its constitution. As to individuals, other methods were employed with them; in order so thoroughly to disunite every party, and even every family, that *no concert, order or effect, might appear in any future opposition.* And in this manner an administration without connexion with the people, or with one another, was first put in possession of government. What good consequences followed from it, we have all seen; whether with regard to virtue, publick or private; to the ease and happiness of the sovereign; or to the real strength of government. But as so much stress

was then laid on the necessity of this new project, it will not be amiss to take a view of the effects of this royal servitude and vile durance, which was so deplored in the reign of the late monarch, and was so carefully to be avoided in the reign of his successor. The effects were these.

In times full of doubt and danger to his person and family, George II maintained the dignity of his crown connected with the liberty of his people, not only unimpaired, but improved, for the space of thirty-three years. He overcame a dangerous rebellion, abetted by foreign force, and raging in the heart of his kingdoms; and thereby destroyed the seeds of all future rebellion that could arise upon the same principle. He carried the glory, the power, the commerce of England, to a height unknown even to this renowned nation in the times of its greatest prosperity: and he left his succession resting on the true and only true foundations of all national and all regal greatness; affection at home, reputation abroad, trust in allies, terrour in rival nations. The most ardent lover of his country cannot wish for Great Britain a happier fate than to continue as she was then left. A people, emulous as we are in affection to our present sovereign, know not how to form a prayer to heaven for a greater blessing upon his virtues, or a higher state of felicity and glory, than that he should live, and should reign, and when Providence ordains it, should die, exactly like his illustrious predecessor.

A great prince may be obliged (though such a thing cannot happen very often) to sacrifice his private inclination to his publick interest. A wise prince will not think that such a restraint implies a condition of servility; and

truly, if such was the condition of the last reign, and the effects were also such as we have described, we ought, no less for the sake of the sovereign whom we love, than for our own, to hear arguments convincing indeed, before we depart from the maxims of that reign, or fly in the face of this great body of strong and recent experience.

One of the principal topicks which was then, and has been since, much employed by that political* school, is an effectual terrour of the growth of an aristocratick power, prejudicial to the rights of the crown, and the balance of the constitution. Any new powers exercised in the house of lords, or in the house of commons, or by the crown, ought certainly to excite the vigilant and anxious jealousy of a free people. Even a new and unprecedented course of action in the whole legislature, without great and evident reason, may be a subject of just uneasiness. I will not affirm, that there may not have lately appeared in the house of lords a disposition to some attempts derogatory to the legal rights of the subject. If any such have really appeared, they have arisen, not from a power properly aristocratick, but from the same influence which is charged with having excited attempts of a similar nature in the house of commons; which house, if it should have been betrayed into an unfortunate quarrel with its constituents, and involved in a charge of the very same nature, could have neither power nor inclination to repel such attempts in others. Those attempts in the house of lords can no more be called aristocratick proceedings, than the proceedings with regard to the county of Middlesex in the house of commons can with any sense be called democratical.

* See the political writings of the late Dr Brown, and many others.

It is true, that the peers have a great influence in the kingdom, and in every part of the publick concerns. While they are men of property, it is impossible to prevent it, except by such means as must prevent all property from its natural operation: an event not easily to be compassed, while property is power; nor by any means to be wished, while the least notion exists of the method by which the spirit of liberty acts, and of the means by which it is preserved. If any particular peers, by their uniform, upright, constitutional conduct, by their publick and their private virtues, have acquired an influence in the country; the people, on whose favour that influence depends, and from whom it arose, will never be duped into an opinion, that such greatness in a peer is the despotism of an aristocracy, when they know and feel it to be the effect and pledge of their own importance.

I am no friend to aristocracy, in the sense at least in which that word is usually understood. If it were not a bad habit to moot cases on the supposed ruin of the constitution, I should be free to declare, that if it must perish, I would rather by far see it resolved into any other form, than lost in that austere and insolent domination. But, whatever my dislikes may be, my fears are not upon that quarter. The question, on the influence of a court, and of a peerage, is not, which of the two dangers is the more eligible, but which is the more imminent. He is but a poor observer, who has not seen, that the generality of peers, far from supporting themselves in a state of independent greatness, are but too apt to fall into an oblivion of their proper dignity, and to run headlong into an abject servitude. Would to God it were true, that the fault of our peers were too

much spirit! It is worthy of some observation that these gentlemen, so jealous of aristocracy, make no complaints of the power of those peers (neither few nor inconsiderable) who are always in the train of a court, and whose whole weight must be considered as a portion of the settled influence of the crown. This is all safe and right; but if some peers (I am very sorry they are not as many as they ought to be) set themselves, in the great concern of peers and commons, against a back-stairs influence and clandestine government, then the alarm begins; then the constitution is in danger of being forced into an aristocracy.

I rest a little the longer on this court topick, because it was much insisted upon at the time of the great change, and has been since frequently revived by many of the agents of that party: for, whilst they are terrifying the great and opulent with the horrours of mob-government, they are by other managers attempting (though hitherto with little success) to alarm the people with a phantom of tyranny in the nobles. All this is done upon their favourite principle of disunion, of sowing jealousies amongst the different orders of the state, and of disjointing the natural strength of the kingdom; that it may be rendered incapable of resisting the sinister designs of wicked men, who have engrossed the royal power.

Thus much of the topicks chosen by the courtiers to recommend their system; it will be necessary to open a little more at large the nature of that party which was formed for its support. Without this, the whole would have been no better than a visionary amusement, like the scheme of Harrington's political club, and not a business in which the nation had a real concern. As a powerful

party, and a party constructed on a new principle, it is a very inviting object of curiosity.

It must be remembered, that since the Revolution, until the period we are speaking of, the influence of the crown had been always employed in supporting the ministers of state, and in carrying on the publick business according to their opinions. But the party now in question is formed upon a very different idea. It is to intercept the favour, protection and confidence of the crown in the passage to its ministers; it is to come between them and their importance in parliament; it is to separate them from all their natural and acquired dependencies; it is intended as the controul, not the support, of administration. The machinery of this system is perplexed in its movements, and false in its principle. It is formed on a supposition that the king is something external to his government; and that he may be honoured and aggrandized, even by its debility and disgrace. The plan proceeds expressly on the idea of enfeebling the regular executory power. It proceeds on the idea of weakening the state in order to strengthen the court. The scheme depending entirely on distrust, on disconnexion, on mutability by principle, on systematick weakness in every particular member; it is impossible that the total result should be substantial strength of any kind.

As a foundation of their scheme, the cabal have established a sort of *rota* in the court. All sorts of parties, by this means, have been brought into administration; from whence few have had the good fortune to escape without disgrace; none at all without considerable losses. In the beginning of each arrangement no professions of

confidence and support are wanting, to induce the leading men to engage. But while the ministers of the day appear in all the pomp and pride of power, while they have all their canvas spread out to the wind, and every sail filled with the fair and prosperous gale of royal favour, in a short time they find, they know not how, a current, which sets directly against them; which prevents all progress; and even drives them backwards. They grow ashamed and mortified in a situation, which, by its vicinity to power, only serves to remind them the more strongly of their insignificance. They are obliged either to execute the orders of their inferiours, or to see themselves opposed by the natural instruments of their office. With the loss of their dignity they lose their temper. In their turn they grow troublesome to that cabal, which, whether it supports or opposes, equally disgraces and equally betrays them. It is soon found necessary to get rid of the heads of administration; but it is of the heads only. As there always are many rotten members belonging to the best connexions, it is not hard to persuade several to continue in office without their leaders. By this means the party goes out much thinner than it came in; and is only reduced in strength by its temporary possession of power. Besides, if by accident, or in course of change, that power should be recovered, the junto have thrown up a retrenchment of these carcases, which may serve to cover themselves in a day of danger. They conclude, not unwisely, that such rotten members will become the first objects of disgust and resentment to their ancient connexions.

They contrive to form in the outward administration two parties at the least; which, whilst they are tearing

one another to pieces, are both competitors for the favour and protection of the cabal; and, by their emulation, contribute to throw every thing more and more into the hands of the interiour managers.

A minister of state will sometimes keep himself totally estranged from all his colleagues; will differ from them in their councils, will privately traverse, and publickly oppose, their measures. He will, however, continue in his employment. Instead of suffering any mark of displeasure, he will be distinguished by an unbounded profusion of court rewards and caresses; because he does what is expected, and all that is expected, from men in office. He helps to keep some form of administration in being, and keeps it at the same time as weak and divided as possible.

However, we must take care not to be mistaken, or to imagine that such persons have any weight in their opposition. When, by them, administration is convinced of its insignificancy, they are soon to be convinced of their own. They never are suffered to succeed in their opposition. They and the world are to be satisfied, that, neither office, nor authority, nor property, nor ability, eloquence, counsel, skill, or union, are of the least importance; but that the mere influence of the court, naked of all support, and destitute of all management, is abundantly sufficient for all its own purposes.

When any adverse connexion is to be destroyed, the cabal seldom appear in the work themselves. They find out some person of whom the party entertains a high opinion. Such a person they endeavour to delude with various pretences. They teach him first to distrust, and then to quarrel with his friends; among whom, by

the same arts, they excite a similar diffidence of him; so that in this mutual fear and distrust, he may suffer himself to be employed as the instrument in the change which is brought about. Afterwards they are sure to destroy him in his turn, by setting up in his place some person in whom he had himself reposed the greatest confidence, and who serves to carry off a considerable part of his adherents.

When such a person has broke in this manner with his connexions, he is soon compelled to commit some flagrant act of iniquitous, personal hostility against some of them (such as an attempt to strip a particular friend of his family estate), by which the cabal hope to render the parties utterly irreconcilable. In truth, they have so contrived matters, that people have greater hatred to the subordinate instruments than to the principal movers.

As in destroying their enemies they make use of instruments not immediately belonging to their corps, so in advancing their own friends they pursue exactly the same method. To promote any of them to considerable rank or emolument, they commonly take care that the recommendation shall pass through the hands of the ostensible ministry: such a recommendation might however appear to the world, as some proof of the credit of ministers, and some means of increasing their strength. To prevent this, the persons so advanced are directed, in all companies, industriously to declare, that they are under no obligations whatsoever to administration; that they have received their office from another quarter; that they are totally free and independent.

When the faction has any job of lucre to obtain, or of vengeance to perpetrate, their way is, to select, for the

execution, those very persons to whose habits, friendships, principles, and declarations, such proceedings are publickly known to be the most adverse; at once to render the instruments the more odious, and therefore the more dependent, and to prevent the people from ever reposing a confidence in any appearance of private friendship or publick principle.

If the administration seem now and then, from remissness, or from fear of making themselves disagreeable, to suffer any popular excesses to go unpunished, the cabal immediately sets up some creature of theirs to raise a clamour against the ministers, as having shamefully betrayed the dignity of government. Then they compel the ministry to become active in conferring rewards and honours on the persons who have been the instruments of their disgrace; and, after having first vilified them with the higher orders for suffering the laws to sleep over the licentiousness of the populace, they drive them (in order to make amends for their former inactivity) to some act of atrocious violence, which renders them completely abhorred by the people. They who remember the riots which attended the Middlesex election, the opening of the present parliament, and the transactions relative to Saint George's Fields, will not be at a loss for an application of these remarks.

That this body may be enabled to compass all the ends of its institution, its members are scarcely ever to aim at the high and responsible offices of the state. They are distributed with art and judgment through all the secondary, but efficient, departments of office, and through the households of all the branches of the royal family: so as on one hand to occupy all the avenues to

the throne; and on the other to forward or frustrate the execution of any measure, according to their own interests. For with the credit and support which they are known to have, though for the greater part in places which are only a genteel excuse for salary, they possess all the influence of the highest posts; and they dictate publickly in almost every thing, even with a parade of superiority. Whenever they dissent (as it often happens) from their nominal leaders, the trained part of the senate, instinctively in the secret, is sure to follow them; provided the leaders, sensible of their situation, do not of themselves recede in time from their most declared opinions. The latter is generally the case. It will not be conceivable to any one who has not seen it, what pleasure is taken by the cabal in rendering these heads of office thoroughly contemptible and ridiculous. And when they are become so, they have then the best chance for being well supported.

The members of the court faction are fully indemnified for not holding places on the slippery heights of the kingdom, not only by the lead in all affairs, but also by the perfect security in which they enjoy less conspicuous, but very advantageous situations. Their places are in express legal tenure, or, in effect, all of them for life. Whilst the first and most respectable persons in the kingdom are tossed about like tennis balls, the sport of a blind and insolent caprice, no minister dares even to cast an oblique glance at the lowest of their body. If an attempt be made upon one of this corps, immediately he flies to sanctuary, and pretends to the most inviolable of all promises. No conveniency of publick arrangement is available to remove any one of them from the specifick situation he holds; and the slightest attempt upon one

of them, by the most powerful minister, is a certain preliminary to his own destruction.

Conscious of their independence, they bear themselves with a lofty air to the exterior ministers. Like Janissaries, they derive a kind of freedom from the very condition of their servitude. They may act just as they please; provided they are true to the great ruling principle of their institution. It is, therefore, not at all wonderful, that people should be so desirous of adding themselves to that body, in which they may possess and reconcile satisfactions the most alluring, and seemingly the most contradictory; enjoying at once all the spirited pleasure of independence, and all the gross lucre and fat emoluments of servitude.

Here is a sketch, though a slight one, of the constitution, laws, and policy, of this new court corporation. The name by which they choose to distinguish themselves, is that of *king's men*, or the *king's friends*, by an invidious exclusion of the rest of his majesty's most loyal and affectionate subjects. The whole system, comprehending the exterior and interior administrations, is commonly called, in the technical language of the court, *double cabinet*; in French or English, as you choose to pronounce it.

Whether all this be a vision of a distracted brain, or the invention of a malicious heart, or a real faction in the country, must be judged by the appearances which things have worn for eight years past. Thus far I am certain, that there is not a single publick man, in or out of office, who has not, at some time or other, borne testimony to the truth of what I have now related. In particular, no persons have been more strong in their

assertions, and louder and more indecent in their complaints, than those who compose all the exterior part of the present administration; in whose time that faction has arrived at such an height of power, and of boldness in the use of it, as may, in the end, perhaps bring about its total destruction.

It is true, that about four years ago, during the administration of the Marquis of Rockingham, an attempt was made to carry on government without their concurrence. However, this was only a transient cloud; they were hid but for a moment; and their constellation blazed out with greater brightness, and a far more vigorous influence, some time after it was blown over. An attempt was at that time made (but without any idea of proscription) to break their corps, to discountenance their doctrines, to revive connexions of a different kind, to restore the principles and policy of the Whigs, to reanimate the cause of liberty by ministerial countenance; and then for the first time were men seen attached in office to every principle they had maintained in opposition. No one will doubt, that such men were abhorred and violently opposed by the court faction, and that such a system could have but a short duration.

It may appear somewhat affected, that in so much discourse upon this extraordinary party, I should say so little of the Earl of Bute, who is the supposed head of it. But this was neither owing to affectation or inadvertence. I have carefully avoided the introduction of personal reflections of any kind. Much the greater part of the topicks which have been used to blacken this nobleman are either unjust or frivolous. At best, they have a tendency to give the resentment of this bitter calamity

a wrong direction, and to turn a publick grievance into a mean personal, or a dangerous national quarrel. Where there is a regular scheme of operations carried on, it is the system, and not any individual person who acts in it, that is truly dangerous. This system has not arisen solely from the ambition of Lord Bute, but from the circumstances which favoured it, and from an indifference to the constitution which had been for some time growing among our gentry. We should have been tried with it, if the Earl of Bute had never existed; and it will want neither a contriving head nor active members, when the Earl of Bute exists no longer. It is not, therefore, to rail at Lord Bute, but firmly to embody against this court party and its practices, which can afford us any prospect of relief in our present condition.

Another motive induces me to put the personal consideration of Lord Bute wholly out of the question. He communicates very little in a direct manner with the greater part of our men of business. This has never been his custom. It is enough for him that he surrounds them with his creatures. Several imagine, therefore, that they have a very good excuse for doing all the work of this faction, when they have no personal connexion with Lord Bute. But whoever becomes a party to an administration, composed of insulated individuals, without faith plighted, tie, or common principle; an administration constitutionally impotent, because supported by no party in the nation; he who contributes to destroy the connexions of men and their trust in one another, or in any sort to throw the dependence of publick counsels upon private will and favour, possibly may have nothing to do with the Earl of Bute. It matters little whether he be

the friend or the enemy of that particular person. But let him be who or what he will, he abets a faction that is driving hard to the ruin of his country. He is sapping the foundation of its liberty, disturbing the sources of its domestick tranquillity, weakening its government over its dependencies, degrading it from all its importance in the system of Europe.

It is this unnatural infusion of a *system of favouritism* into a government which in a great part of its constitution is popular, that has raised the present ferment in the nation. The people, without entering deeply into its principles, could plainly perceive its effects, in much violence, in a great spirit of innovation, and a general disorder in all the functions of government. I keep my eye solely on this system; if I speak of those measures which have arisen from it, it will be so far only as they illustrate the general scheme. This is the fountain of all those bitter waters of which, through an hundred different conduits, we have drunk until we are ready to burst. The discretionary power of the crown in the formation of ministry, abused by bad or weak men, has given rise to a system, which, without directly violating the letter of any law, operates against the spirit of the whole constitution.

A plan of favouritism for our executory government is essentially at variance with the plan of our legislature. One great end undoubtedly of a mixed government like ours, composed of monarchy, and of controuls, on the part of the higher people and the lower, is that the prince shall not be able to violate the laws. This is useful indeed and fundamental. But this, even at first view, is no more than a negative advantage; an armour merely

defensive. It is therefore next in order, and equal in importance, *that the discretionary powers which are necessarily vested in the monarch, whether for the execution of the laws, or for the nomination to magistracy and office, or for conducting the affairs of peace and war, or for ordering the revenue, should all be exercised upon publick principles and national grounds, and not on the likings or prejudices, the intrigues or policies, of a court.* This, I said, is equal in importance to the securing a government according to law. The laws reach but a very little way. Constitute government how you please, infinitely the greater part of it must depend upon the exercise of the powers which are left at large to the prudence and uprightness of ministers of state. Even all the use and potency of the laws depends upon them. Without them, your commonwealth is no better than a scheme upon paper; and not a living, active, effective constitution. It is possible that through negligence, or ignorance, or design artfully conducted, ministers may suffer one part of government to languish, another to be perverted from its purposes, and every valuable interest of the country to fall into ruin and decay, without possibility of fixing any single act on which a criminal prosecution can be justly grounded. The due arrangement of men in the active part of the state, far from being foreign to the purposes of a wise government, ought to be among its very first and dearest objects. When, therefore, the abettors of the new system tell us, that between them and their opposers there is nothing but a struggle for power, and that therefore we are no ways concerned in it; we must tell those who have the impudence to insult us in this manner, that, of all things, we ought to be the

most concerned who and what sort of men they are that hold the trust of every thing that is dear to us. Nothing can render this a point of indifference to the nation, but what must either render us totally desperate, or soothe us into the security of idiots. We must soften into a credulity below the milkiness of infancy to think all men virtuous. We must be tainted with a malignity truly diabolical, to believe all the world to be equally wicked and corrupt. Men are in publick life as in private, some good, some evil. The elevation of the one, and the depression of the other, are the first objects of all true policy. But that form of government, which, neither in its direct institutions, nor in their immediate tendency, has contrived to throw its affairs into the most trust-worthy hands, but has left its whole executory system to be disposed of agreeably to the uncontrouled pleasure of any one man, however excellent or virtuous, is a plan of polity defective not only in that member, but consequentially erroneous in every part of it.

In arbitrary governments, the constitution of the ministry follows the constitution of the legislature. Both the law and the magistrate are the creatures of will. It must be so. Nothing, indeed, will appear more certain, on any tolerable consideration of this matter, than that *every sort of government ought to have its administration correspondent to its legislature*. If it should be otherwise, things must fall into an hideous disorder. The people of a free commonwealth, who have taken such care that their laws should be the result of general consent, cannot be so senseless as to suffer their executory system to be composed of persons on whom they have no dependence, and whom no proofs of the publick love and confidence

have recommended to those powers, upon the use of which the very being of the state depends.

The popular election of magistrates, and popular disposition of rewards and honours, is one of the first advantages of a free state. Without it, or something equivalent to it, perhaps the people cannot long enjoy the substance of freedom; certainly none of the vivifying energy of good government. The frame of our commonwealth did not admit of such an actual election: but it provided as well, and (while the spirit of the constitution is preserved) better for all the effects of it than by the method of suffrage in any democratick state whatsoever. It had always, until of late, been held the first duty of Parliament *to refuse to support Government, until power was in the hands of persons who were acceptable to the people, or while factions predominated in the Court in which the nation had no confidence.* Thus all the good effects of popular election were supposed to be secured to us, without the mischiefs attending on perpetual intrigue, and a distinct canvass for every particular office throughout the body of the people. This was the most noble and refined part of our constitution. The people, by their representatives and grandees, were intrusted with a deliberative power in making laws; the king with the controul of his negative. The king was intrusted with the deliberative choice and the election to office; the people had the negative in a parliamentary refusal to support. Formerly this power of controul was what kept ministers in awe of parliaments, and parliaments in reverence with the people. If the use of this power of controul on the system and persons of administration is gone, every thing is lost, parliament and all. We may

assure ourselves, that if parliament will tamely see evil men take possession of all the strong-holds of their country, and allow them time and means to fortify themselves, under a pretence of giving them a fair trial, and upon a hope of discovering, whether they will not be reformed by power, and whether their measures will not be better than their morals; such a parliament will give countenance to their measures also, whatever that parliament may pretend, and whatever those measures may be.

Every good political institution must have a preventive operation as well as a remedial. It ought to have a natural tendency to exclude bad men from government, and not to trust for the safety of the state to subsequent punishment alone: punishment, which has ever been tardy and uncertain; and which, when power is suffered in bad hands, may chance to fall rather on the injured than the criminal.

Before men are put forward into the great trusts of the state, they ought by their conduct to have obtained such a degree of estimation in their country, as may be some sort of pledge and security to the publick, that they will not abuse those trusts. It is no mean security for a proper use of power, that a man has shewn by the general tenour of his actions, that the affection, the good opinion, the confidence of his fellow citizens have been among the principal objects of his life; and that he has owed none of the degradations of his power or fortune to a settled contempt, or occasional forfeiture of their esteem.

That man who before he comes into power has no friends, or who coming into power is obliged to desert his friends, or who losing it has no friends to sympathize

with him; he who has no sway among any part of the landed or commercial interest, but whose whole importance has begun with his office, and is sure to end with it; is a person who ought never to be suffered by a controuling parliament to continue in any of those situations which confer the lead and direction of all our publick affairs; because such a man *has no connexion with the interest of the people.*

Those knots or cabals of men who have got together, avowedly without any publick principle, in order to sell their conjunct iniquity at the higher rate, and are therefore universally odious, ought never to be suffered to domineer in the state; because they have *no connexion with the sentiments and opinions of the people.*

These are considerations which in my opinion enforce the necessity of having some better reason, in a free country, and a free parliament, for supporting the ministers of the crown, than that short one, *That the king has thought proper to appoint them.* There is something very courtly in this. But it is a principle pregnant with all sorts of mischief, in a constitution like ours, to turn the views of active men from the country to the court. Whatever be the road to power, that is the road which will be trod. If the opinion of the country be of no use as a means of power or consideration, the qualities which usually procure that opinion will be no longer cultivated. And whether it will be right, in a state so popular in its constitution as ours, to leave ambition without popular motives, and to trust all to the operation of pure virtue in the minds of kings, and ministers, and publick men, must be submitted to the judgment and good sense of the people of England.

Cunning men are here apt to break in, and, without directly controverting the principle, to raise objections from the difficulty under which the sovereign labours, to distinguish the genuine voice and sentiments of his people, from the clamour of a faction, by which it is so easily counterfeited. The nation, they say, is generally divided into parties, with views and passions utterly irreconcilable. If the king should put his affairs into the hands of any one of them, he is sure to disgust the rest; if he select particular men from among them all, it is a hazard that he disgusts them all. Those who are left out, however divided before, will soon run into a body of opposition; which, being a collection of many discontents into one focus, will without doubt be hot and violent enough. Faction will make its cries resound through the nation, as if the whole were in an uproar, when by far the majority, and much the better part, will seem for a while as it were annihilated by the quiet in which their virtue and moderation incline them to enjoy the blessings of government. Besides that the opinion of the mere vulgar is a miserable rule even with regard to themselves, on account of their violence and instability. So that if you were to gratify them in their humour to-day, that very gratification would be a ground of their dissatisfaction on the next. Now as all these rules of publick opinion are to be collected with great difficulty, and to be applied with equal uncertainty as to the effect, what better can a king of England do, than to employ such men as he finds to have views and inclinations most conformable to his own; who are least infected with pride and self-will; and who are least moved by such popular humours as are perpetually

traversing his designs, and disturbing his service; trusting that, when he means no ill to his people, he will be supported in his appointments, whether he chooses to keep or to change, as his private judgment or his pleasure leads him? He will find a sure resource in the real weight and influence of the crown, when it is not suffered to become an instrument in the hands of a faction.

I will not pretend to say that there is nothing at all in this mode of reasoning; because I will not assert that there is no difficulty in the art of government. Undoubtedly the very best administration must encounter a great deal of opposition; and the very worst will find more support than it deserves. Sufficient appearances will never be wanting to those who have a mind to deceive themselves. It is a fallacy in constant use with those who would level all things, and confound right with wrong, to insist upon the inconveniencies which are attached to every choice, without taking into consideration the different weight and consequence of those inconveniencies. The question is not concerning *absolute* discontent or *perfect* satisfaction in government; neither of which can be pure and unmixed at any time, or upon any system. The controversy is about that degree of good-humour in the people, which may possibly be attained, and ought certainly to be looked for. While some politicians may be waiting to know whether the sense of every individual be against them, accurately distinguishing the vulgar from the better sort, drawing lines between the enterprises of a faction and the efforts of a people, they may chance to see the government, which they are so nicely weighing and dividing, and distinguishing, tumble to the ground in the midst of their wise

deliberation. Prudent men, when so great an object as the security of government, or even its peace, is at stake, will not run the risk of a decision which may be fatal to it. They who can read the political sky will see a hurricane in a cloud no bigger than a hand at the very edge of the horizon, and will run into the first harbour. No lines can be laid down for civil or political wisdom. They are a matter incapable of exact definition. But, though no man can draw a stroke between the confines of day and night, yet light and darkness are upon the whole tolerably distinguishable. Nor will it be impossible for a prince to find out such a mode of government, and such persons to administer it, as will give a great degree of content to his people; without any curious and anxious research for that abstract, universal, perfect harmony, which while he is seeking, he abandons those means of ordinary tranquillity which are in his power without any research at all.

It is not more the duty than it is the interest of a prince, to aim at giving tranquillity to his government. But those who advise him may have an interest in disorder and confusion. If the opinion of the people is against them, they will naturally wish that it should have no prevalence. Here it is that the people must on their part shew themselves sensible of their own value. Their whole importance, in the first instance, and afterwards their whole freedom, is at stake. Their freedom cannot long survive their importance. Here it is that the natural strength of the kingdom, the great peers, the leading landed gentlemen, the opulent merchants and manufacturers, the substantial yeomanry, must interpose, to rescue their prince, themselves, and their posterity.

We are at present at issue upon this point. We are in the great crisis of this contention ; and the part which men take, one way or other, will serve to discriminate their characters and their principles. Until the matter is decided, the country will remain in its present confusion. For while a system of administration is attempted, entirely repugnant to the genius of the people, and not conformable to the plan of their government, every thing must necessarily be disordered for a time, until this system destroys the constitution, or the constitution gets the better of this system.

There is, in my opinion, a peculiar venom and malignity in this political distemper beyond any that I have heard or read of. In former times the projectors of arbitrary government attacked only the liberties of their country; a design surely mischievous enough to have satisfied a mind of the most unruly ambition. But a system unfavourable to freedom may be so formed, as considerably to exalt the grandeur of the state; and men may find, in the pride and splendour of that prosperity, some sort of consolation for the loss of their solid privileges. Indeed the increase of the power of the state has often been urged by artful men, as a pretext for some abridgement of the publick liberty. But the scheme of the junto under consideration, not only strikes a palsy into every nerve of our free constitution, but in the same degree benumbs and stupifies the whole executive power: rendering government in all its grand operations languid, uncertain, ineffective; making ministers fearful of attempting, and incapable of executing, any useful plan of domestick arrangement, or of foreign politicks. It tends to produce neither the security of

a free government, nor the energy of a monarchy that is absolute. Accordingly the crown has dwindled away, in proportion to the unnatural and turgid growth of this excrescence on the court.

The interiour ministry are sensible, that war is a situation which sets in its full light the value of the hearts of a people; and they well know, that the beginning of the importance of the people must be the end of theirs. For this reason they discover upon all occasions the utmost fear of every thing which by possibility may lead to such an event. I do not mean that they manifest any of that pious fear which is backward to commit the safety of the country to the dubious experiment of war. Such a fear, being the tender sensation of virtue, excited, as it is regulated, by reason, frequently shews itself in a seasonable boldness, which keeps danger at a distance, by seeming to despise it. Their fear betrays to the first glance of the eye, its true cause, and its real object. Foreign powers, confident in the knowledge of their character, have not scrupled to violate the most solemn treaties; and, in defiance of them, to make conquests in the midst of a general peace, and in the heart of Europe. Such was the conquest of Corsica, by the professed enemies of the freedom of mankind, in defiance of those who were formerly its professed defenders. We have had just claims upon the same powers: rights which ought to have been sacred to them as well as to us, as they had their origin in our lenity and generosity towards France and Spain in the day of their great humiliation. Such I call the ransom of Manilla, and the demand on France for the East India prisoners. But these powers put a just confidence in their resource of

the *double cabinet*. These demands (one of them at least) are hastening fast towards an acquittal by prescription. Oblivion begins to spread her cobwebs over all our spirited remonstrances. Some of the most valuable branches of our trade are also on the point of perishing from the same cause. I do not mean those branches which bear without the hand of the vine-dresser; I mean those which the policy of treaties had formerly secured to us; I mean to mark and distinguish the trade of Portugal, the loss of which, and the power of the cabal, have one and the same æra.

If, by any chance, the ministers who stand before the curtain possess or affect any spirit, it makes little or no impression. Foreign courts and ministers, who were among the first to discover and to profit by this invention of the *double cabinet*, attend very little to their remonstrances. They know that those shadows of ministers have nothing to do in the ultimate disposal of things. Jealousies and animosities are sedulously nourished in the outward administration, and have been even considered as a *causa sine qua non* in its constitution: thence foreign courts have a certainty, that nothing can be done by common counsel in this nation. If one of those ministers officially takes up a business with spirit, it serves only the better to signalize the meanness of the rest, and the discord of them all. His colleagues in office are in haste to shake him off, and to disclaim the whole of his proceedings. Of this nature was that astonishing transaction, in which Lord Rochford, our ambassador at Paris, remonstrated against the attempt upon Corsica, in consequence of a direct authority from Lord Shelburne. This remonstrance the French minister treated with the

contempt that was natural: as he was assured, from the ambassador of his court to ours, that these orders of Lord Shelburne were not supported by the rest of the (I had like to have said British) administration. Lord Rochford, a man of spirit, could not endure this situation. The consequences were, however, curious. He returns from Paris, and comes home full of anger. Lord Shelburne, who gave the orders, is obliged to give up the seals. Lord Rochford, who obeyed these orders, receives them. He goes, however, into another department of the same office, that he might not be obliged officially to acquiesce, in one situation, under what he had officially remonstrated against, in another. At Paris, the Duke of Choiseul considered this office arrangement as a compliment to him: here it was spoken of as an attention to the delicacy of Lord Rochford. But whether the compliment was to one or both, to this nation it was the same. By this transaction the condition of our court lay exposed in all its nakedness. Our office correspondence has lost all pretence to authenticity: British policy is brought into derision in those nations, that a while ago trembled at the power of our arms, whilst they looked up with confidence to the equity, firmness, and candour, which shone in all our negociations. I represent this matter exactly in the light in which it has been universally received.

Such has been the aspect of our foreign politicks, under the influence of a *double cabinet*. With such an arrangement at court, it is impossible it should have been otherwise. Nor is it possible that this scheme should have a better effect upon the government of our dependencies, the first, the dearest, and most delicate objects,

of the interiour policy of this empire. The colonies know, that administration is separated from the court, divided within itself, and detested by the nation. The *double cabinet* has, in both the parts of it, shewn the most malignant dispositions towards them, without being able to do them the smallest mischief.

They are convinced, by sufficient experience, that no plan, either of lenity or rigour, can be pursued with uniformity and perseverance. Therefore they turn their eyes entirely from Great Britain, where they have neither dependence on friendship, nor apprehension from enmity. They look to themselves, and their own arrangements. They grow every day into alienation from this country; and whilst they are becoming disconnected with our government, we have not the consolation to find, that they are even friendly in their new independence. Nothing can equal the futility, the weakness, the rashness, the timidity, the perpetual contradiction in the management of our affairs in that part of the world. A volume might be written on this melancholy subject; but it were better to leave it entirely to the reflections of the reader himself, than not to treat it in the extent it deserves.

In what manner our domestick economy is affected by this system, it is needless to explain. It is the perpetual subject of their own complaints.

The court party resolve the whole into faction. Having said something before upon this subject, I shall only observe here, that, when they give this account of the prevalence of faction, they present no very favourable aspect of the confidence of the people in their own government. They may be assured, that however they

amuse themselves with a variety of projects for substituting something else in the place of that great and only foundation of government, the confidence of the people, every attempt will but make their condition worse. When men imagine that their food is only a cover for poison, and when they neither love nor trust the hand that serves it, it is not the name of the roast beef of Old England, that will persuade them to sit down to the table that is spread for them. When the people conceive that laws, and tribunals, and even popular assemblies, are perverted from the ends of their institution, they find in those names of degenerated establishments only new motives to discontent. Those bodies, which, when full of life and beauty, lay in their arms, and were their joy and comfort, when dead and putrid, become but the more loathsome from remembrance of former endearments. A sullen gloom and furious disorder prevail by fits: the nation loses its relish for peace and prosperity; as it did in that season of fullness which opened our troubles in the time of Charles the First. A species of men to whom a state of order would become a sentence of obscurity are nourished into a dangerous magnitude by the heat of intestine disturbances; and it is no wonder that, by a sort of sinister piety, they cherish, in their turn, the disorders which are the parents of all their consequence. Superficial observers consider such persons as the cause of the publick uneasiness, when, in truth, they are nothing more than the effect of it. Good men look upon this distracted scene with sorrow and indignation. Their hands are tied behind them. They are despoiled of all the power which might enable them to reconcile the strength of government with the rights of

the people. They stand in a most distressing alternative. But in the election among evils they hope better things from temporary confusion, than from established servitude. In the mean time, the voice of law is not to be heard. Fierce licentiousness begets violent restraints. The military arm is the sole reliance; and then, call your constitution what you please, it is the sword that governs. The civil power, like every other that calls in the aid of an ally stronger than itself, perishes by the assistance it receives. But the contrivers of this scheme of government will not trust solely to the military power; because they are cunning men. Their restless and crooked spirit drives them to rake in the dirt of every kind of expedient. Unable to rule the multitude, they endeavour to raise divisions amongst them. One mob is hired to destroy another; a procedure which at once encourages the boldness of the populace, and justly encreases their discontent. Men become pensioners of state on account of their abilities in the array of riot, and the discipline of confusion. Government is put under the disgraceful necessity of protecting from the severity of the laws that very licentiousness, which the laws had been before violated to repress. Every thing partakes of the original disorder. Anarchy predominates without freedom, and servitude without submission or subordination. These are the consequences inevitable to our publick peace, from the scheme of rendering the executory government at once odious and feeble; of freeing administration from the constitutional and salutary controul of parliament, and inventing for it a *new controul*, unknown to the constitution, an *interiour cabinet*; which brings the whole body of government into confusion and contempt.

After having stated, as shortly as I am able, the effects of this system on our foreign affairs, on the policy of our government with regard to our dependencies, and on the interiour economy of the commonwealth; there remains only, in this part of my design, to say something of the grand principle which first recommended this system at court. The pretence was, to prevent the king from being enslaved by a faction, and made a prisoner in his closet. This scheme might have been expected to answer at least its own end, and to indemnify the king, in his personal capacity, for all the confusion into which it has thrown his government. But has it in reality answered this purpose? I am sure, if it had, every affectionate subject would have one motive for enduring with patience all the evils which attend it.

In order to come at the truth of this matter, it may not be amiss to consider it somewhat in detail. I speak here of the king, and not of the crown; the interests of which we have already touched. Independent of that greatness which a king possesses merely by being a representative of the national dignity, the things in which he may have an individual interest seem to be these;—wealth accumulated; wealth spent in magnificence, pleasure, or beneficence; personal respect and attention; and, above all, private ease and repose of mind. These compose the inventory of prosperous circumstances, whether they regard a prince or a subject; their enjoyments differing only in the scale upon which they are formed.

Suppose then we were to ask, whether the king has been richer than his predecessors in accumulated wealth, since the establishment of the plan of favouritism? I believe it will be found that the picture of royal indigence,

which our court has presented until this year, has been truly humiliating. Nor has it been relieved from this unseemly distress, but by means which have hazarded the affection of the people, and shaken their confidence in parliament. If the publick treasures had been exhausted in magnificence and splendour, this distress would have been accounted for, and in some measure justified. Nothing would be more unworthy of this nation, than with a mean and mechanical rule, to mete out the splendour of the crown. Indeed I have found very few persons disposed to so ungenerous a procedure. But the generality of people, it must be confessed, do feel a good deal mortified, when they compare the wants of the court with its expences. They do not behold the cause of this distress in any part of the apparatus of royal magnificence. In all this, they see nothing but the operations of parsimony, attended with all the consequences of profusion. Nothing expended, nothing saved. Their wonder is increased by their knowledge, that besides the revenue settled on his majesty's civil list to the amount of 800,000*l.* a year, he has a farther aid from a large pension list, near 90,000*l.* a year, in Ireland; from the produce of the dutchy of Lancaster (which we are told has been greatly improved); from the revenue of the dutchy of Cornwall; from the American quit rents; from the four and a half *per cent.* duty in the Leeward Islands; this last worth to be sure considerably more than 40,000*l.* a year. The whole is certainly not much short of a million annually.

These are revenues within the knowledge and cognizance of our national councils. We have no direct right to examine into the receipts from his majesty's German

dominions, and the bishoprick of Osnaburg. This is unquestionably true. But that which is not within the province of parliament, is yet within the sphere of every man's own reflection. If a foreign prince resided amongst us, the state of his revenues could not fail of becoming the subject of our speculation. Filled with an anxious concern for whatever regards the welfare of our sovereign, it is impossible, in considering the miserable circumstances into which he has been brought, that this obvious topick should be entirely passed over. There is an opinion universal, that these revenues produce something not inconsiderable, clear of all charges and establishments. This produce the people do not believe to be hoarded, nor perceive to be spent. It is accounted for in the only manner it can, by supposing that it is drawn away, for the support of that court faction, which, whilst it distresses the nation, impoverishes the prince in every one of his resources. I once more caution the reader, that I do not urge this consideration concerning the foreign revenue, as if I supposed we had a direct right to examine into the expenditure of any part of it; but solely for the purpose of shewing how little this system of favouritism has been advantageous to the monarch himself; which, without magnificence, has sunk him into a state of unnatural poverty; at the same time that he possessed every means of affluence, from ample revenues, both in this country, and in other parts of his dominions.

Has this system provided better for the treatment becoming his high and sacred character, and secured the king from those disgusts attached to the necessity of employing men who are not personally agreeable? This

is a topick upon which for many reasons I could wish to be silent; but the pretence of securing against such causes of uneasiness, is the corner-stone of the court-party. It has however so happened, that if I were to fix upon any one point, in which this system has been more particularly and shamefully blamable, the effects which it has produced would justify me in choosing for that point its tendency to degrade the personal dignity of the sovereign, and to expose him to a thousand contradictions and mortifications. It is but too evident in what manner these projectors of royal greatness have fulfilled all their magnificent promises. Without recapitulating all the circumstances of the reign, every one of which is, more or less, a melancholy proof of the truth of what I have advanced, let us consider the language of the court but a few years ago, concerning most of the persons now in the external administration: let me ask, whether any enemy to the personal feelings of the sovereign could possibly contrive a keener instrument of mortification, and degradation of all dignity, than almost every part and member of the present arrangement? Nor, in the whole course of our history, has any compliance with the will of the people ever been known to extort from any prince a greater contradiction to all his own declared affections and dislikes, than that which is now adopted, in direct opposition to every thing the people approve and desire.

An opinion prevails, that greatness has been more than once advised to submit to certain condescensions towards individuals, which have been denied to the entreaties of a nation. For the meanest and most dependent instrument of this system knows, that there are

hours when its existence may depend upon his adherence to it; and he takes his advantage accordingly. Indeed it is a law of nature, that whoever is necessary to what we have made our object is sure, in some way, or in some time or other, to become our master. All this however is submitted to, in order to avoid that monstrous evil of governing in concurrence with the opinion of the people. For it seems to be laid down as a maxim, that a king has some sort of interest in giving uneasiness to his subjects: that all who are pleasing to them, are to be of course disagreeable to him: that as soon as the persons who are odious at court are known to be odious to the people, it is snatched at as a lucky occasion of showering down upon them all kinds of emoluments and honours. None are considered as well-wishers to the crown, but those who advised to some unpopular course of action; none capable of serving it, but those who are obliged to call at every instant upon all its power for the safety of their lives. None are supposed to be fit priests in the temple of government, but the persons who are compelled to fly into it for sanctuary. Such is the effect of this refined project; such is ever the result of all the contrivances, which are used to free men from the servitude of their reason, and from the necessity of ordering their affairs according to their evident interests. These contrivances oblige them to run into a real and ruinous servitude, in order to avoid a supposed restraint, that might be attended with advantage.

If therefore this system has so ill answered its own grand pretence of saving the king from the necessity of employing persons disagreeable to him, has it given more peace and tranquillity to his majesty's private hours? No,

most certainly. The father of his people cannot possibly enjoy repose, while his family is in such a state of distraction. Then what has the crown or the king profited by all this fine-wrought scheme? Is he more rich, or more splendid, or more powerful, or more at his ease, by so many labours and contrivances? Have they not beggared his exchequer, tarnished the splendour of his court, sunk his dignity, galled his feelings, discomposed the whole order and happiness of his private life?

It will be very hard, I believe, to state in what respect the king has profited by that faction which presumptuously choose to call themselves *his friends*.

If particular men had grown into an attachment, by the distinguished honour of the society of their sovereign; and, by being the partakers of his amusements, came sometimes to prefer the gratification of his personal inclinations to the support of his high character, the thing would be very natural, and it would be excusable enough. But the pleasant part of the story is, that these *king's friends* have no more ground for usurping such a title, than a resident freeholder in Cumberland or in Cornwall. They are only known to their sovereign by kissing his hand, for the offices, pensions, and grants, into which they have deceived his benignity. May no storm ever come, which will put the firmness of their attachment to the proof; and which, in the midst of confusions, and terrours, and sufferings, may demonstrate the eternal difference between a true and severe friend to the monarchy, and a slippery sycophant to the court! *Quantum infido scurræ distabit amicus.*

So far I have considered the effect of the court system, chiefly as it operates upon the executive government,

on the temper of the people, and on the happiness of the sovereign. It remains that we should consider, with a little attention, its operation upon parliament.

Parliament was indeed the great object of all these politicks, the end at which they aimed, as well as the instrument by which they were to operate. But, before parliament could be made subservient to a system, by which it was to be degraded from the dignity of a national council into a mere member of the court, it must be greatly changed from its original character.

In speaking of this body, I have my eye chiefly on the house of commons. I hope I shall be indulged in a few observations on the nature and character of that assembly; not with regard to its *legal form and power*, but to its *spirit*, and to the purposes it is meant to answer in the constitution.

The house of commons was supposed originally to be *no part of the standing government of this country*. It was considered as a *controul*, issuing *immediately* from the people, and speedily to be resolved into the mass from whence it arose. In this respect it was in the higher part of government what juries are in the lower. The capacity of a magistrate being transitory, and that of a citizen permanent, the latter capacity it was hoped would of course preponderate in all discussions, not only between the people and the standing authority of the crown, but between the people and the fleeting authority of the house of commons itself. It was hoped that, being of a middle nature between subject and government, they would feel with a more tender and a nearer interest every thing that concerned the people, than the other remoter and more permanent parts of legislature.

Whatever alterations time and the necessary accommodation of business may have introduced, this character can never be sustained, unless the house of commons shall be made to bear some stamp of the actual disposition of the people at large. It would (among publick misfortunes) be an evil more natural and tolerable, that the house of commons should be infected with every epidemical phrensy of the people, as this would indicate some consanguinity, some sympathy of nature with their constituents, than that they should in all cases be wholly untouched by the opinions and feelings of the people out of doors. By this want of sympathy they would cease to be a house of commons. For it is not the derivation of the power of that house from the people, which makes it in a distinct sense their representative. The king is the representative of the people; so are the lords; so are the judges. They all are trustees for the people, as well as the commons; because no power is given for the sole sake of the holder; and although government certainly is an institution of divine authority, yet its forms, and the persons who administer it, all originate from the people.

A popular origin cannot therefore be the characteristical distinction of a popular representative. This belongs equally to all parts of government, and in all forms. The virtue, spirit, and essence of a house of commons consists in its being the express image of the feelings of the nation. It was not instituted to be a controul *upon* the people, as of late it has been taught, by a doctrine of the most pernicious tendency. It was designed as a controul *for* the people. Other institutions have been formed for the purpose of checking popular excesses; and they are, I apprehend, fully

adequate to their object. If not, they ought to be made so. The house of commons, as it was never intended for the support of peace and subordination, is miserably appointed for that service; having no stronger weapon than its mace, and no better officer than its serjeant at arms, which it can command of its own proper authority. A vigilant and jealous eye over executory and judicial magistracy; an anxious care of publick money, an openness, approaching towards facility, to publick complaint: these seem to be the true characteristicks of a house of commons. But an addressing house of commons, and a petitioning nation; a house of commons full of confidence, when the nation is plunged in despair; in the utmost harmony with ministers, whom the people regard with the utmost abhorrence; who vote thanks, when the publick opinion calls upon them for impeachments; who are eager to grant, when the general voice demands account; who, in all disputes between the people and administration, presume against the people; who punish their disorders, but refuse even to inquire into the provocations to them; this is an unnatural, a monstrous state of things in this constitution. Such an assembly may be a great, wise, awful senate; but it is not, to any popular purpose, a house of commons. This change from an immediate state of procuration and delegation to a course of acting as from original power, is the way in which all the popular magistracies in the world have been perverted from their purposes. It is indeed their greatest and sometimes their incurable corruption. For there is a material distinction between that corruption by which particular points are carried against reason, (this is a thing which cannot be prevented by human wisdom,

and is of less consequence) and the corruption of the principle itself. For then the evil is not accidental, but settled. The distemper becomes the natural habit.

For my part, I shall be compelled to conclude the principle of parliament to be totally corrupted, and therefore its ends entirely defeated, when I see two symptoms: first, a rule of indiscriminate support to all ministers; because this destroys the very end of parliament as a controul, and is a general previous sanction to misgovernment; and secondly, the setting up any claims adverse to the right of free election; for this tends to subvert the legal authority by which the house of commons sits.

I know that, since the Revolution, along with many dangerous, many useful powers of government have been weakened. It is absolutely necessary to have frequent recourse to the legislature. Parliaments must therefore sit every year, and for great part of the year. The dreadful disorders of frequent elections have also necessitated a septennial instead of a triennial duration. These circumstances, I mean the constant habit of authority, and the unfrequency of elections, have tended very much to draw the house of commons towards the character of a standing senate. It is a disorder which has arisen from the cure of greater disorders; it has arisen from the extreme difficulty of reconciling liberty under a monarchical government, with external strength and with internal tranquillity.

It is very clear that we cannot free ourselves entirely from this great inconvenience; but I would not increase an evil, because I was not able to remove it; and because it was not in my power to keep the house of commons

religiously true to its first principles, I would not argue for carrying it to a total oblivion of them. This has been the great scheme of power in our time. They who will not conform their conduct to the publick good, and cannot support it by the prerogative of the crown, have adopted a new plan. They have totally abandoned the shattered and old-fashioned fortress of prerogative, and made a lodgement in the strong-hold of parliament itself. If they have any evil design to which there is no ordinary legal power commensurate, they bring it into parliament. In parliament the whole is executed from the beginning to the end. In parliament the power of obtaining their object is absolute; and the safety in the proceeding perfect: no rules to confine, no after-reckonings to terrify. Parliament cannot, with any great propriety, punish others for things in which they themselves have been accomplices. Thus the controul of parliament upon the executory power is lost; because parliament is made to partake in every considerable act of government. *Impeachment, that great guardian of the purity of the constitution, is in danger of being lost, even to the idea of it.*

By this plan several important ends are answered to the cabal. If the authority of parliament supports itself, the credit of every act of government, which they contrive, is saved: but if the act be so very odious that the whole strength of parliament is insufficient to recommend it, then parliament is itself discredited; and this discredit increases more and more that indifference to the constitution, which it is the constant aim of its enemies, by their abuse of parliamentary powers, to render general among the people. Whenever parliament is persuaded

to assume the offices of executive government, it will lose all the confidence, love, and veneration, which it has ever enjoyed whilst it was supposed the *corrective and controul* of the acting powers of the state. This would be the event, though its conduct in such a perversion of its functions should be tolerably just and moderate; but if it should be iniquitous, violent, full of passion, and full of faction, it would be considered as the most intolerable of all the modes of tyranny.

For a considerable time this separation of the representatives from their constituents went on with a silent progress; and had those, who conducted the plan for their total separation, been persons of temper and abilities any way equal to the magnitude of their design, the success would have been infallible: but by their precipitancy they have laid it open in all its nakedness; the nation is alarmed at it: and the event may not be pleasant to the contrivers of the scheme. In the last session, the corps called the *king's friends* made a hardy attempt, all at once, *to alter the right of election itself*; to put it into the power of the house of commons to disable any person disagreeable to them from sitting in parliament, without any other rule than their own pleasure; to make incapacities, either general for descriptions of men, or particular for individuals; and to take into their body, persons who avowedly had never been chosen by the majority of legal electors, nor agreeably to any known rule of law.

The arguments upon which this claim was founded and combated, are not my business here. Never has a subject been more amply and more learnedly handled, nor upon one side, in my opinion, more satisfactorily;

they who are not convinced by what is already written would not receive conviction *though one arose from the dead.*

I too have thought on this subject: but my purpose here, is only to consider it as a part of the favourite project of government; to observe on the motives which led to it; and to trace its political consequences.

A violent rage for the punishment of Mr Wilkes was the pretence of the whole. This gentleman, by setting himself strongly in opposition to the court cabal, had become at once an object of their persecution, and of the popular favour. The hatred of the court party pursuing, and the countenance of the people protecting him, it very soon became not at all a question on the man, but a trial of strength between the two parties. The advantage of the victory in this particular contest was the present, but not the only, nor by any means the principal, object. Its operation upon the character of the house of commons was the great point in view. The point to be gained by the cabal was this; that a precedent should be established, tending to shew, *That the favour of the people was not so sure a road as the favour of the court even to popular honours and popular trusts.* A strenuous resistance to every appearance of lawless power; a spirit of independence carried to some degree of enthusiasm; an inquisitive character to discover, and a bold one to display, every corruption and every errour of government; these are the qualities which recommend a man to a seat in the house of commons, in open and merely popular elections. An indolent and submissive disposition; a disposition to think charitably of all the actions of men in power, and to live in a mutual

intercourse of favours with them ; an inclination rather to countenance a strong use of authority, than to bear any sort of licentiousness on the part of the people ; these are unfavourable qualities in an open election for members of parliament.

The instinct which carries the people towards the choice of the former, is justified by reason ; because a man of such a character, even in its exorbitances, does not directly contradict the purposes of a trust, the end of which is a controul on power. The latter character, even when it is not in its extreme, will execute this trust but very imperfectly ; and, if deviating to the least excess, will certainly frustrate instead of forwarding the purposes of a controul on government. But when the house of commons was to be new modelled, this principle was not only to be changed but reversed. Whilst any errours committed in support of power were left to the law, with every advantage of favourable construction, of mitigation, and finally of pardon ; all excesses on the side of liberty, or in pursuit of popular favour, or in defence of popular rights and privileges, were not only to be punished by the rigour of the known law, but by a *discretionary* proceeding, which brought on *the loss of the popular object itself.* Popularity was to be rendered, if not directly penal, at least highly dangerous. The favour of the people might lead even to a disqualification of representing them. Their odium might become, strained through the medium of two or three constructions, the means of sitting as the trustee of all that was dear to them. This is punishing the offence in the offending part. Until this time, the opinion of the people, through the power of an assembly, still in some sort popular, led

to the greatest honours and emoluments in the gift of the crown. Now the principle is reversed; and the favour of the court is the only sure way of obtaining and holding those honours which ought to be in the disposal of the people.

It signifies very little how this matter may be quibbled away. Example, the only argument of effect in civil life, demonstrates the truth of my proposition. Nothing can alter my opinion concerning the pernicious tendency of this example, until I see some man for his indiscretion in the support of power, for his violent and intemperate servility, rendered incapable of sitting in parliament. For as it now stands, the fault of overstraining popular qualities, and, irregularly if you please, asserting popular privileges, has led to disqualification; the opposite fault never has produced the slightest punishment. Resistance to power has shut the door of the house of commons to one man; obsequiousness and servility, to none.

Not that I would encourage popular disorder, or any disorder. But I would leave such offences to the law, to be punished in measure and proportion. The laws of this country are for the most part constituted, and wisely so, for the general ends of government, rather than for the preservation of our particular liberties. Whatever therefore is done in support of liberty, by persons not in publick trust, or not acting merely in that trust, is liable to be more or less out of the ordinary course of the law; and the law itself is sufficient to animadvert upon it with great severity. Nothing indeed can hinder that severe letter from crushing us, except the temperaments it may receive from a trial by jury. But if the habit prevails of

going beyond the law, and superseding this judicature, of carrying offences, real or supposed, into the legislative bodies, who shall establish themselves into *courts of criminal equity* (so *the star chamber* has been called by Lord Bacon), all the evils of the *star chamber* are revived. A large and liberal construction in ascertaining offences, and a discretionary power in punishing them, is the idea of *criminal equity*; which is in truth a monster in jurisprudence. It signifies nothing whether a court for this purpose be a committee of council or a house of commons, or a house of lords; the liberty of the subject will be equally subverted by it. The true end and purpose of that house of parliament, which entertains such a jurisdiction, will be destroyed by it.

I will not believe, what no other man living believes, that Mr Wilkes was punished for the indecency of his publications, or the impiety of his ransacked closet. If he had fallen in a common slaughter of libellers and blasphemers, I could well believe that nothing more was meant than was pretended. But when I see, that, for years together, full as impious, and perhaps more dangerous writings to religion, and virtue, and order, have not been punished, nor their authors discountenanced; that the most audacious libels on royal majesty have passed without notice; that the most treasonable invectives against the laws, liberties, and constitution of the country, have not met with the slightest animadversion; I must consider this as a shocking and shameless pretence. Never did an envenomed scurrility against every thing sacred and civil, publick and private, rage through the kingdom with such a furious and unbridled licence. All this while the peace of the nation

must be shaken, to ruin one libeller, and to tear from the populace a single favourite.

Nor is it that vice merely skulks in an obscure and contemptible impunity. Does not the publick behold with indignation, persons not only generally scandalous in their lives, but the identical persons who, by their society, their instruction, their example, their encouragement, have drawn this man into the very faults which have furnished the cabal with a pretence for his persecution, loaded with every kind of favour, honour and distinction, which a court can bestow? Add but the crime of servility (the *fœdum crimen servitutis*) to every other crime, and the whole mass is immediately transmuted into virtue, and becomes the just subject of reward and honour. When therefore I reflect upon this method pursued by the cabal in distributing rewards and punishments, I must conclude that Mr Wilkes is the object of persecution, not on account of what he has done in common with others who are the objects of reward, but for that in which he differs from many of them: that he is pursued for the spirited dispositions which are blended with his vices; for his unconquerable firmness, for his resolute, indefatigable, strenuous resistance against oppression.

In this case, therefore, it was not the man that was to be punished, nor his faults that were to be discountenanced. Opposition to acts of power was to be marked by a kind of civil proscription. The popularity which should arise from such an opposition was to be shewn unable to protect it. The qualities by which court is made to the people, were to render every fault inexpiable, and every errour irretrievable. The qualities by which

court is made to power, were to cover and to sanctify every thing. He that will have a sure and honourable seat in the house of commons must take care how he adventures to cultivate popular qualities; otherwise he may remember the old maxim, *Breves et infaustos populi Romani amores.* If, therefore, a pursuit of popularity expose a man to greater dangers than a disposition to servility, the principle which is the life and soul of popular elections will perish out of the constitution.

It behoves the people of England to consider how the house of commons, under the operation of these examples, must of necessity be constituted. On the side of the court will be, all honours, offices, emoluments; every sort of personal gratification to avarice or vanity; and, what is of more moment to most gentlemen, the means of growing, by innumerable petty services to individuals, into a spreading interest in their country. On the other hand, let us suppose a person unconnected with the court, and in opposition to its system. For his own person, no office, or emolument, or title; no promotion ecclesiastical, or civil, or military, or naval, for children, or brothers, or kindred. In vain an expiring interest in a borough calls for offices, or small livings, for the children of mayors, and aldermen, and capital burgesses. His court rival has them all. He can do an infinite number of acts of generosity and kindness, and even of publick spirit. He can procure indemnity from quarters. He can procure advantages in trade. He can get pardons for offences. He can obtain a thousand favours, and avert a thousand evils. He may, while he betrays every valuable interest of the kingdom, be a benefactor, a patron, a father, a guardian angel to

his borough. The unfortunate independent member has nothing to offer, but harsh refusal, or pitiful excuse, or despondent representation of a hopeless interest. Except from his private fortune, in which he may be equalled, perhaps exceeded, by his court competitor, he has no way of shewing any one good quality, or of making a single friend. In the house, he votes for ever in a dispirited minority. If he speaks, the doors are locked. A body of loquacious place-men go out to tell the world that all he aims at is to get into office. If he has not the talent of elocution, which is the case of many as wise and knowing men as any in the house, he is liable to all these inconveniencies, without the eclat which attends upon any tolerably successful exertion of eloquence. Can we conceive a more discouraging post of duty than this? Strip it of the poor reward of popularity; suffer even the excesses committed in defence of the popular interest to become a ground for the majority of that house to form a disqualification out of the line of the law, and at their pleasure, attended not only with the loss of the franchise, but with every kind of personal disgrace.—If this shall happen, the people of this kingdom may be assured that they cannot be firmly or faithfully served by any man. It is out of the nature of men and things that they should; and their presumption will be equal to their folly if they expect it. The power of the people, within the laws, must shew itself sufficient to protect every representative in the animated performance of his duty, or that duty cannot be performed. The house of commons can never be a controul on other parts of government, unless they are controuled themselves by their constituents; and unless these constituents

possess some right in the choice of that house, which it is not in the power of that house to take away. If they suffer this power of arbitrary incapacitation to stand, they have utterly perverted every other power of the house of commons. The late proceeding I will not say, *is* contrary to law; it *must* be so; for the power which is claimed cannot, by any possibility, be a legal power in any limited member of government.

The power which they claim, of declaring incapacities, would not be above the just claims of a final judicature, if they had not laid it down as a leading principle, that they had no rule in the exercise of this claim, but their own *discretion*. Not one of their abettors has ever undertaken to assign the principle of unfitness, the species or degree of delinquency, on which the house of commons will expel, nor the mode of proceeding upon it, nor the evidence upon which it is established. The direct consequence of which is, that the first franchise of an Englishman, and that on which all the rest vitally depend, is to be forfeited for some offence which no man knows, and which is to be proved by no known rule whatsoever of legal evidence. This is so anomalous to our whole constitution, that I will venture to say, the most trivial right, which the subject claims, never was, nor can be, forfeited in such a manner.

The whole of their usurpation is established upon this method of arguing. We do not *make* laws. No; we do not contend for this power. We only *declare* law; and, as we are a tribunal both competent and supreme, what we declare to be law becomes law, although it should not have been so before. Thus the circumstance of having no *appeal* from their jurisdiction is made to

imply that they have no *rule* in the exercise of it: the judgment does not derive its validity from its conformity to the law; but preposterously the law is made to attend on the judgment; and the rule of the judgment is no other than the *occasional will of the house.* An arbitrary discretion leads, legality follows; which is just the very nature and description of a legislative act.

This claim in their hands was no barren theory. It was pursued into its utmost consequences; and a dangerous principle has begot a correspondent practice. A systematick spirit has been shewn upon both sides. The electors of Middlesex chose a person whom the house of commons had voted incapable; and the house of commons has taken in a member whom the electors of Middlesex had not chosen. By a construction on that legislative power which had been assumed, they declared that the true legal sense of the country was contained in the minority, on that occasion; and might, on a resistance to a vote of incapacity, be contained in any minority.

When any construction of law goes against the spirit of the privilege it was meant to support, it is a vicious construction. It is material to us to be represented really and *bona fide*, and not in forms, in types, and shadows, and fictions of law. The right of election was not established merely as a *matter of form*, to satisfy some method and rule of technical reasoning; it was not a principle which might substitute a *Titius* or a *Maevius*, a *John Doe* or *Richard Roe*, in the place of a man specially chosen; not a principle which was just as well satisfied with one man as with another. It is a right, the effect of which is to give to the people that

man, and *that man only*, whom, by their voices actually, not constructively given, they declare that they know, esteem, love, and trust. This right is a matter within their own power of judging and feeling; not an *ens rationis* and creature of law: nor can those devices, by which any thing else is substituted in the place of such an actual choice, answer in the least degree the end of representation.

I know that the courts of law have made as strained constructions in other cases. Such is the construction in common recoveries. The method of construction which in that case gives to the persons in remainder, for their security and representative, the door-keeper, cryer, or sweeper of the court, or some other shadowy being without substance or effect, is a fiction of a very coarse texture. This was however suffered, by the acquiescence of the whole kingdom, for ages; because the evasion of the old statute of Westminster, which authorized perpetuities, had more sense and utility than the law which was evaded. But an attempt to turn the right of election into such a farce and mockery as a fictitious fine and recovery, will, I hope, have another fate; because the laws which give it are infinitely dear to us, and the evasion is infinitely contemptible.

The people indeed have been told, that this power of discretionary disqualification is vested in hands that they may trust, and who will be sure not to abuse it to their prejudice. Until I find something in this argument differing from that on which every mode of despotism has been defended, I shall not be inclined to pay it any great compliment. The people are satisfied to trust themselves with the exercise of their own privileges, and

do not desire this kind intervention of the house of commons to free them from the burthen. They are certainly in the right. They ought not to trust the house of commons with a power over their franchises: because the constitution, which placed two other co-ordinate powers to controul it, reposed no such confidence in that body. It were a folly well deserving servitude for its punishment, to be full of confidence where the laws are full of distrust; and to give to a house of commons, arrogating to its sole resolution the most harsh and odious part of legislative authority, that degree of submission which is due only to the legislature itself.

When the house of commons, in an endeavour to obtain new advantages at the expence of the other orders of the state, for the benefit of the *commons at large*, have pursued strong measures; if it were not just, it was at least natural, that the constituents should connive at all their proceedings; because we were ourselves ultimately to profit. But when this submission is urged to us, in a contest between the representatives and ourselves, and where nothing can be put into their scale which is not taken from ours, they fancy us to be children when they tell us they are our representatives, our own flesh and blood, and that all the stripes they give us are for our good. The very desire of that body to have such a trust contrary to law reposed in them, shews that they are not worthy of it. They certainly will abuse it; because all men possessed of an uncontrouled discretionary power leading to the aggrandizement and profit of their own body have always abused it: and I see no particular sanctity in our times, that is at all

likely, by a miraculous operation, to overrule the course of nature.

But we must purposely shut our eyes, if we consider this matter merely as a contest between the house of commons and the electors. The true contest is between the electors of the kingdom and the crown; the crown acting by an instrumental house of commons. It is precisely the same, whether the ministers of the crown can disqualify by a dependent house of commons, or by a dependent court of *star chamber*, or by a dependent court of king's bench. If once members of parliament can be practically convinced that they do not depend on the affection or opinion of the people for their political being, they will give themselves over, without even an appearance of reserve, to the influence of the court.

Indeed, a parliament unconnected with the people is essential to a ministry unconnected with the people; and therefore those who saw through what mighty difficulties the interiour ministry waded, and the exteriour were dragged, in this business, will conceive of what prodigious importance, the new corps of *king's men* held this principle of occasional and personal incapacitation, to the whole body of their design.

When the house of commons was thus made to consider itself as the master of its constituents, there wanted but one thing to secure that house against all possible future deviation towards popularity; an *unlimited* fund of money to be laid out according to the pleasure of the court.

To complete the scheme of bringing our court to a resemblance to the neighbouring monarchies, it was necessary, in effect, to destroy those appropriations of

revenue, which seem to limit the property, as the other laws had done the powers, of the crown. An opportunity for this purpose was taken, upon an application to parliament for payment of the debts of the civil list; which in 1769 had amounted to 513,000*l.* Such application had been made upon former occasions; but to do it in the former manner would by no means answer the present purpose.

Whenever the crown had come to the commons to desire a supply for the discharging of debts due on the civil list; it was always asked and granted with one of the three following qualifications; sometimes with all of them. Either it was stated, that the revenue had been diverted from its purposes by parliament; or that those duties had fallen short of the sum for which they were given by parliament, and that the intention of the legislature had not been fulfilled; or that the money required to discharge the civil list debt was to be raised chargeable on the civil list duties. In the reign of Queen Anne, the crown was found in debt. The lessening and granting away some part of her revenue by parliament was alleged as the cause of that debt, and pleaded as an equitable ground, such it certainly was, for discharging it. It does not appear that the duties which were then applied to the ordinary government produced clear above 580,000*l.* a year; because, when they were afterwards granted to George the First, 120,000*l.* was added to complete the whole to 700,000*l.* a year. Indeed it was then asserted, and, I have no doubt, truly, that for many years the net produce did not amount to above 550,000*l.* The Queen's extraordinary charges were besides very considerable; equal, at least,

to any we have known in our time. The application to parliament was not for an absolute grant of money; but to empower the Queen to raise it by borrowing upon the civil list funds.

The civil list debt was twice paid in the reign of George the First. The money was granted upon the same plan which had been followed in the reign of Queen Anne. The civil list revenues were then mortgaged for the sum to be raised, and stood charged with the ransom of their own deliverance.

George the Second received an addition to his civil list. Duties were granted for the purpose of raising 800,000*l.* a year. It was not until he had reigned nineteen years, and after the last rebellion, that he called upon parliament for a discharge of the civil list debt. The extraordinary charges brought on by the rebellion, account fully for the necessities of the crown. However, the extraordinary charges of government were not thought a ground fit to be relied on.

A deficiency of the civil list duties for several years before was stated as the principal, if not the sole ground on which an application to parliament could be justified. About this time the produce of these duties had fallen pretty low: and even upon an average of the whole reign they never produced 800,000*l.* a year clear to the treasury.

That prince reigned fourteen years afterwards: not only no new demands were made; but with so much good order were his revenues and expences regulated, that, although many parts of the establishment of the court were upon a larger and more liberal scale than they have been since, there was a considerable sum in

hand, on his decease, amounting to about 170,000*l.* applicable to the service of the civil list of his present majesty. So that, if this reign commenced with a greater charge than usual, there was enough and more than enough, abundantly to supply all the extraordinary expence. That the civil list should have been exceeded in the two former reigns, especially in the reign of George the First, was not at all surprising. His revenue was but 700,000*l.* annually; if it ever produced so much clear. The prodigious and dangerous disaffection to the very being of the establishment, and the cause of a pretender then powerfully abetted from abroad, produced many demands of an extraordinary nature both abroad and at home. Much management and great expences were necessary. But the throne of no prince has stood upon more unshaken foundations than that of his present majesty.

To have exceeded the sum given for the civil list, and to have incurred a debt without special authority of parliament, was, *prima facie*, a criminal act: as such, ministers ought naturally rather to have withdrawn it from the inspection, than to have exposed it to the scrutiny, of parliament. Certainly they ought, of themselves, officially to have come armed with every sort of argument, which, by explaining, could excuse, a matter in itself of presumptive guilt. But the terrours of the house of commons are no longer for ministers.

On the other hand the peculiar character of the house of commons, as trustee of the publick purse, would have led them to call with a punctilious solicitude for every publick account, and to have examined into them with the most rigorous accuracy.

The capital use of an account is, that the reality of the charge, the reason of incurring it, and the justice and necessity of discharging it, should all appear antecedent to the payment. No man ever pays first, and calls for his account afterwards; because he would thereby let out of his hands the principal, and indeed only effectual, means of compelling a full and fair one. But, in national business, there is an additional reason for a previous production of every account. It is a check, perhaps the only one, upon a corrupt and prodigal use of publick money. An account after payment is to no rational purpose an account. However, the house of commons thought all these to be antiquated principles: they were of opinion, that the most parliamentary way of proceeding was, to pay first what the court thought proper to demand, and to take its chance for an examination into accounts at some time of greater leisure.

The nation had settled 800,000*l.* a year on the crown, as sufficient for the support of its dignity, upon the estimate of its own ministers. When ministers came to parliament, and said that this allowance had not been sufficient for the purpose, and that they had incurred a debt of 500,000*l.* would it not have been natural for parliament first to have asked how, and by what means, their appropriated allowance came to be insufficient? Would it not have savoured of some attention to justice, to have seen in what periods of administration this debt had been originally incurred; that they might discover, and if need were, animadvert on the persons who were found the most culpable? To put their hands upon such articles of expenditure as they thought improper

or excessive, and to secure, in future, against such misapplication or exceeding? Accounts for any other purposes are but a matter of curiosity, and no genuine parliamentary object. All the accounts which could answer any parliamentary end were refused, or postponed by previous questions. Every idea of prevention was rejected, as conveying an improper suspicion of the ministers of the crown.

When every leading account had been refused, many others were granted with sufficient facility.

But with great candour also, the house was informed, that hardly any of them could be ready until the next session; some of them perhaps not so soon. But, in order firmly to establish the precedent of *payment previous to account*, and to form it into a settled rule of the house, the god in the machine was brought down, nothing less than the wonder-working *law of parliament.* It was alleged, that it is the law of parliament, when any demand comes from the crown, that the house must go immediately into the committee of supply; in which committee it was allowed, that the production and examination of accounts would be quite proper and regular. It was therefore carried, that they should go into the committee without delay, and without accounts, in order to examine with great order and regularity things that could not possibly come before them. After this stroke of orderly and parliamentary wit and humour, they went into the committee; and very generously voted the payment.

There was a circumstance in that debate too remarkable to be overlooked. This debt of the civil list was all along argued upon the same footing as a debt of the state, contracted upon national authority. Its payment

was urged as equally pressing upon the publick faith and honour: and when the whole year's account was stated, in what is called *the budget*, the ministry valued themselves on the payment of so much publick debt, just as if they had discharged 500,000*l.* of navy or exchequer bills. Though, in truth, their payment, from the sinking fund, of debt which was never contracted by parliamentary authority, was, to all intents and purposes, so much debt incurred. But such is the present notion of publick credit, and payment of debt. No wonder that it produces such effects.

Nor was the house at all more attentive to a provident security against future, than it had been to a vindictive retrospect to past mismanagements. I should have thought indeed that a ministerial promise, during their own continuance in office, might have been given, though this would have been but a poor security for the publick. Mr Pelham gave such an assurance, and he kept his word. But nothing was capable of extorting from our ministers any thing which had the least resemblance to a promise of confining the expences of the civil list within the limits which had been settled by parliament. This reserve of theirs I look upon to be equivalent to the clearest declaration, that they were resolved upon a contrary course.

However, to put the matter beyond all doubt, in the speech from the throne, after thanking parliament for the relief so liberally granted, the ministers inform the two houses, that they will *endeavour* to confine the expences of the civil government—within what limits, think you? those which the law had prescribed? Not in the least—"such limits as the *honour of the crown* can possibly admit."

Thus they established an *arbitrary* standard for that dignity which parliament had defined and limited to a *legal* standard. They gave themselves, under the lax and indeterminate idea of the *honour of the crown*, a full loose for all manner of dissipation, and all manner of corruption. This arbitrary standard they were not afraid to hold out to both houses; while an idle and unoperative act of parliament, estimating the dignity of the crown at 800,000*l.* and confining it to that sum, adds to the number of obsolete statutes which load the shelves of libraries, without any sort of advantage to the people.

After this proceeding, I suppose that no man can be so weak as to think that the crown is limited to any settled allowance whatsoever. For if the ministry has 800,000*l.* a year by the law of the land; and if by the law of parliament all the debts which exceed it are to be paid previous to the production of any account; I presume that this is equivalent to an income with no other limits than the abilities of the subject and the moderation of the court; that is to say, it is such an income as is possessed by every absolute monarch in Europe. It amounts, as a person of great ability said in the debate, to an unlimited power of drawing upon the sinking fund. Its effect on the publick credit of this kingdom must be obvious; for in vain is the sinking fund the great buttress of all the rest, if it be in the power of the ministry to resort to it for the payment of any debts which they may choose to incur, under the name of the civil list, and through the medium of a committee, which thinks itself obliged by law to vote supplies without any other account than that of the mere existence of the debt.

Five hundred thousand pounds is a serious sum. But it is nothing to the prolifick principle upon which the sum was voted: a principle that may be well called, *the fruitful mother of an hundred more.* Neither is the damage to publick credit of very great consequence, when compared with that which results to publick morals and to the safety of the constitution, from the exhaustless mine of corruption opened by the precedent, and to be wrought by the principle, of the late payment of the debts of the civil list. The power of discretionary disqualification by one law of parliament, and the necessity of paying every debt of the civil list by another law of parliament, if suffered to pass unnoticed, must establish such a fund of rewards and terrours as will make parliament the best appendage and support of arbitrary power that ever was invented by the wit of man. This is felt. The quarrel is begun between the representatives and the people. The court faction have at length committed them.

In such a strait the wisest may well be perplexed, and the boldest staggered. The circumstances are in a great measure new. We have hardly any land-marks from the wisdom of our ancestors, to guide us. At best we can only follow the spirit of their proceeding in other cases. I know the diligence with which my observations on our publick disorders have been made; I am very sure of the integrity of the motives on which they are published: I cannot be equally confident in any plan for the absolute cure of those disorders, or for their certain future prevention. My aim is to bring this matter into more publick discussion. Let the sagacity of others work upon it. It is not

uncommon for medical writers to describe histories of diseases very accurately, on whose cure they can say but very little.

The first ideas which generally suggest themselves, for the cure of parliamentary disorders, are, to shorten the duration of parliaments; and to disqualify all, or a great number of placemen, from a seat in the house of commons. Whatever efficacy there may be in those remedies, I am sure in the present state of things it is impossible to apply them. A restoration of the right of free election is a preliminary indispensable to every other reformation. What alterations ought afterwards to be made in the constitution, is a matter of deep and difficult research.

If I wrote merely to please the popular palate, it would indeed be as little troublesome to me as to another, to extol these remedies, so famous in speculation, but to which their greatest admirers have never attempted seriously to resort in practice. I confess then, that I have no sort of reliance upon either a triennial parliament, or a place-bill. With regard to the former, perhaps it might rather serve to counteract, than to promote the ends that are proposed by it. To say nothing of the horrible disorders among the people attending frequent elections, I should be fearful of committing, every three years, the independent gentlemen of the country into a contest with the treasury. It is easy to see which of the contending parties would be ruined first. Whoever has taken a careful view of publick proceedings, so as to endeavour to ground his speculations on his experience, must have observed how prodigiously greater the power of ministry is in the first

and last session of a parliament, than it is in the intermediate periods, when members sit a little firm on their seats. The persons of the greatest parliamentary experience, with whom I have conversed, did constantly, in canvassing the fate of questions, allow something to the court side, upon account of the elections depending or imminent. The evil complained of, if it exists in the present state of things, would hardly be removed by a triennial parliament: for, unless the influence of government in elections can entirely be taken away, the more frequently they return, the more they will harrass private independence; the more generally men will be compelled to fly to the settled systematick interest of government, and to the resources of a boundless civil list. Certainly something may be done, and ought to be done, towards lessening that influence in elections; and this will be necessary upon a plan either of longer or shorter duration of parliament. But nothing can so perfectly remove the evil, as not to render such contentions, too frequently repeated, utterly ruinous, first to independence of fortune, and then to independence of spirit. As I am only giving an opinion on this point, and not at all debating it in an adverse line, I hope I may be excused in another observation. With great truth I may aver, that I never remember to have talked on this subject with any man much conversant with publick business, who considered short parliaments as a real improvement of the constitution. Gentlemen, warm in a popular cause, are ready enough to attribute all the declarations of such persons to corrupt motives. But the habit of affairs, if, on one hand, it tends to corrupt the mind, furnishes it, on the other, with the means of

better information. The authority of such persons will always have some weight. It may stand upon a par with the speculations of those who are less practised in business; and who, with perhaps purer intentions, have not so effectual means of judging. It is besides an effect of vulgar and puerile malignity to imagine, that every statesman is of course corrupt; and that his opinion, upon every constitutional point, is solely formed upon some sinister interest.

The next favourite remedy is a place-bill. The same principle guides in both; I mean, the opinion which is entertained by many, of the infallibility of laws and regulations, in the cure of publick distempers. Without being as unreasonably doubtful as many are unwisely confident, I will only say, that this also is a matter very well worthy of serious and mature reflection. It is not easy to foresee, what the effect would be, of disconnecting with parliament the greatest part of those who hold civil employments, and of such mighty and important bodies as the military and naval establishments. It were better, perhaps, that they should have a corrupt interest in the forms of the constitution, than that they should have none at all. This is a question altogether different from the disqualification of a particular description of revenue officers from seats in parliament; or, perhaps, of all the lower sorts of them from votes in elections. In the former case, only the few are affected; in the latter, only the inconsiderable. But a great official, a great professional, a great military and naval interest, all necessarily comprehending many people of the first weight, ability, wealth, and spirit, has been gradually formed in the kingdom. These new interests must be let into a

share of representation, else possibly they may be inclined to destroy those institutions of which they are not permitted to partake. This is not a thing to be trifled with; nor is it every well-meaning man, that is fit to put his hands to it. Many other serious considerations occur. I do not open them here, because they are not directly to my purpose; proposing only to give the reader some taste of the difficulties that attend all capital changes in the constitution; just to hint the uncertainty, to say no worse, of being able to prevent the court, as long as it has the means of influence abundantly in its power, of applying that influence to parliament; and perhaps, if the publick method were precluded, of doing it in some worse and more dangerous method. Underhand and oblique ways would be studied. The science of evasion, already tolerably understood, would then be brought to the greatest perfection. It is no inconsiderable part of wisdom, to know how much of an evil ought to be tolerated; lest, by attempting a degree of purity impracticable in degenerate times and manners, instead of cutting off the subsisting ill practices, new corruptions might be produced for the concealment and security of the old. It were better, undoubtedly, that no influence at all could affect the mind of a member of parliament. But of all modes of influence, in my opinion, a place under the government is the least disgraceful to the man who holds it, and by far the most safe to the country. I would not shut out that sort of influence which is open and visible, which is connected with the dignity and the service of the state, when it is not in my power to prevent the influence of contracts, of subscriptions, of direct bribery, and those innumerable methods of clandestine

corruption, which are abundantly in the hands of the court, and which will be applied as long as these means of corruption, and the disposition to be corrupted, have existence amongst us. Our constitution stands on a nice equipoise, with steep precipices and deep waters upon all sides of it. In removing it from a dangerous leaning towards one side, there may be a risk of oversetting it on the other. Every project of a material change in a government so complicated as ours, combined at the same time with external circumstances still more complicated, is a matter full of difficulties: in which a considerate man will not be too ready to decide; a prudent man too ready to undertake; or an honest man too ready to promise. They do not respect the publick nor themselves, who engage for more than they are sure that they ought to attempt, or that they are able to perform. These are my sentiments, weak perhaps, but honest and unbiassed; and submitted entirely to the opinion of grave men, well affected to the constitution of their country, and of experience in what may best promote or hurt it.

Indeed, in the situation in which we stand, with an immense revenue, an enormous debt, mighty establishments, government itself a great banker and a great merchant, I see no other way for the preservation of a decent attention to publick interest in the representatives, but *the interposition of the body of the people itself*, whenever it shall appear, by some flagrant and notorious act, by some capital innovation, that these representatives are going to over-leap the fences of the law, and to introduce an arbitrary power. This interposition is a most unpleasant remedy. But, if it be a legal remedy, it is intended on some occasion to be used; to be used

then only, when it is evident that nothing else can hold the constitution to its true principles.

The distempers of monarchy were the great subjects of apprehension and redress, in the last century; in this, the distempers of parliament. It is not in parliament alone that the remedy for parliamentary disorders can be completed; hardly indeed can it begin there. Until a confidence in government is re-established, the people ought to be excited to a more strict and detailed attention to the conduct of their representatives. Standards for judging more systematically upon their conduct ought to be settled in the meetings of counties and corporations. Frequent and correct lists of the voters in all important questions ought to be procured.

By such means something may be done. By such means it may appear who those are, that, by an indiscriminate support of all administrations, have totally banished all integrity and confidence out of publick proceedings; have confounded the best men with the worst; and weakened and dissolved, instead of strengthening and compacting, the general frame of government. If any person is more concerned for government and order, than for the liberties of his country; even he is equally concerned to put an end to this course of indiscriminate support. It is this blind and undistinguishing support, that feeds the spring of those very disorders, by which he is frightened into the arms of the faction which contains in itself the source of all disorders, by enfeebling all the visible and regular authority of the state. The distemper is increased by his injudicious and preposterous endeavours, or pretences, for the cure of it.

An exterior administration, chosen for its impotency,

or after it is chosen purposely rendered impotent, in order to be rendered subservient, will not be obeyed. The laws themselves will not be respected, when those who execute them are despised: and they will be despised, when their power is not immediate from the crown, or natural in the kingdom. Never were ministers better supported in parliament. Parliamentary support comes and goes with office, totally regardless of the man, or the merit. Is government strengthened? It grows weaker and weaker. The popular torrent gains upon it every hour. Let us learn from our experience. It is not support that is wanting to government, but reformation. When ministry rests upon publick opinion, it is not indeed built upon a rock of adamant; it has, however, some stability. But when it stands upon private humour, its structure is of stubble, and its foundation is on quicksand. I repeat it again—He that supports every administration subverts all government. The reason is this: The whole business in which a court usually takes an interest goes on at present equally well, in whatever hands, whether high or low, wise or foolish, scandalous or reputable; there is nothing therefore to hold it firm to any one body of men, or to any one consistent scheme of politicks. Nothing interposes, to prevent the full operation of all the caprices and all the passions of a court upon the servants of the publick. The system of administration is open to continual shocks and changes, upon the principles of the meanest cabal, and the most contemptible intrigue. Nothing can be solid and permanent. All good men at length fly with horrour from such a service. Men of rank and ability, with the spirit which ought to animate such men in a free state, while

they decline the jurisdiction of dark cabal on their actions and their fortunes, will, for both, cheerfully put themselves upon their country. They will trust an inquisitive and distinguishing parliament; because it does enquire, and does distinguish. If they act well, they know, that, in such a parliament, they will be supported against any intrigue; if they act ill, they know that no intrigue can protect them. This situation, however awful, is honourable. But in one hour, and in the self-same assembly, without any assigned or assignable cause, to be precipitated from the highest authority to the most marked neglect, possibly into the greatest peril of life and reputation, is a situation full of danger, and destitute of honour. It will be shunned equally by every man of prudence, and every man of spirit.

Such are the consequences of the division of court from the administration; and of the division of publick men among themselves. By the former of these, lawful government is undone; by the latter, all opposition to lawless power is rendered impotent. Government may in a great measure be restored, if any considerable bodies of men have honesty and resolution enough never to accept administration, unless this garrison of *king's men*, which is stationed, as in a citadel, to controul and enslave it, be entirely broken and disbanded, and every work they have thrown up be levelled with the ground. The disposition of publick men to keep this corps together, and to act under it, or to co-operate with it, is a touchstone by which every administration ought in future to be tried. There has not been one which has not sufficiently experienced the utter incompatibility of that faction with the public peace, and with all the ends of good

government: since, if they opposed it, they soon lost every power of serving the crown; if they submitted to it, they lost all the esteem of their country. Until ministers give to the publick a full proof of their entire alienation from that system, however plausible their pretences, we may be sure they are more intent on the emoluments than the duties of office. If they refuse to give this proof, we know of what stuff they are made. In this particular, it ought to be the electors' business to look to their representatives. The electors ought to esteem it no less culpable in their member to give a single vote in parliament to such an administration, than to take an office under it; to endure it, than to act in it. The notorious infidelity and versatility of members of parliament, in their opinions of men and things, ought in a particular manner to be considered by the electors in the enquiry which is recommended to them. This is one of the principal holdings of that destructive system, which has endeavoured to unhinge all the virtuous, honourable, and useful connexions in the kingdom.

This cabal has, with great success, propagated a doctrine which serves for a colour to those acts of treachery; and whilst it receives any degree of countenance, it will be utterly senseless to look for a vigorous opposition to the court party. The doctrine is this: That all political connexions are in their nature factious, and as such ought to be dissipated and destroyed; and that the rule for forming administrations is mere personal ability, rated by the judgment of this cabal upon it, and taken by draughts from every division and denomination of publick men. This decree was solemnly promulgated by the head of the court corps, the Earl of Bute himself,

in a speech which he made, in the year 1766, against the then administration, the only administration which he has ever been known directly and publickly to oppose.

It is indeed in no way wonderful, that such persons should make such declarations. That connexion and faction are equivalent terms, is an opinion which has been carefully inculcated at all times by unconstitutional statesmen. The reason is evident. Whilst men are linked together, they easily and speedily communicate the alarm of any evil design. They are enabled to fathom it with common counsel, and to oppose it with united strength. Whereas, when they lie dispersed, without concert, order, or discipline, communication is uncertain, counsel difficult, and resistance impracticable. Where men are not acquainted with each other's principles nor experienced in each other's talents, nor at all practised in their mutual habitudes and dispositions by joint efforts in business; no personal confidence, no friendship, no common interest, subsisting among them; it is evidently impossible that they can act a publick part with uniformity, perseverance, or efficacy. In a connexion, the most inconsiderable man, by adding to the weight of the whole, has his value, and his use; out of it, the greatest talents are wholly unserviceable to the publick. No man, who is not inflamed by vain-glory into enthusiasm, can flatter himself that his single, unsupported, desultory, unsystematick endeavours are of power to defeat the subtle designs and united cabals of ambitious citizens. When bad men combine, the good must associate; else they will fall, one by one, an unpitied sacrifice in a contemptible struggle.

It is not enough in a situation of trust in the

commonwealth, that a man means well to his country; it is not enough that in his single person he never did an evil act, but always voted according to his conscience, and even harangued against every design which he apprehended to be prejudicial to the interests of his country. This innoxious and ineffectual character, that seems formed upon a plan of apology and disculpation, falls miserably short of the mark of publick duty. That duty demands and requires, that what is right should not only be made known, but made prevalent; that what is evil should not only be detected, but defeated. When the publick man omits to put himself in a situation of doing his duty with effect, it is an omission that frustrates the purposes of his trust almost as much as if he had formally betrayed it. It is surely no very rational account of a man's life, that he has always acted right; but has taken special care, to act in such a manner that his endeavours could not possibly be productive of any consequence.

I do not wonder that the behaviour of many parties should have made persons of tender and scrupulous virtue somewhat out of humour with all sorts of connexion in politicks. I admit that people frequently acquire in such confederacies a narrow, bigotted, and proscriptive spirit; that they are apt to sink the idea of the general good in this circumscribed and partial interest. But, where duty renders a critical situation a necessary one, it is our business to keep free from the evils attendant upon it; and not to fly from the situation itself. If a fortress is seated in an unwholesome air, an officer of the garrison is obliged to be attentive to his health, but he must not desert his station. Every profession, not excepting the glorious one of a soldier, or the

sacred one of a priest, is liable to its own particular vices; which, however, form no argument against those ways of life; nor are the vices themselves inevitable to every individual in those professions. Of such a nature are connexions in politicks; essentially necessary for the full performance of our publick duty, accidentally liable to degenerate into faction. Commonwealths are made of families, free commonwealths of parties also; and we may as well affirm, that our natural regards and ties of blood tend inevitably to make men bad citizens, as that the bonds of our party weaken those by which we are held to our country.

Some legislators went so far as to make neutrality in party a crime against the state. I do not know whether this might not have been rather to overstrain the principle. Certain it is, the best patriots in the greatest commonwealths have always commended and promoted such connexions. *Idem sentire de republica*, was with them a principal ground of friendship and attachment; nor do I know any other capable of forming firmer, dearer, more pleasing, more honourable, and more virtuous habitudes The Romans carried this principle a great way. Even the holding of offices together, the disposition of which arose from chance, not selection, gave rise to a relation which continued for life. It was called *necessitudo sortis*; and it was looked upon with a sacred reverence. Breaches of any of these kinds of civil relation were considered as acts of the most distinguished turpitude. The whole people was distributed into political societies, in which they acted in support of such interests in the state as they severally affected. For it was then thought no crime, to endeavour by every honest means to advance

to superiority and power those of your own sentiments and opinions. This wise people was far from imagining that those connexions had no tie, and obliged to no duty; but that men might quit them without shame, upon every call of interest. They believed private honour to be the great foundation of publick trust; that friendship was no mean step towards patriotism; that he who, in the common intercourse of life, shewed he regarded somebody besides himself, when he came to act in a publick situation, might probably consult some other interest than his own. Never may we become *plus sages que les sages*, as the French comedian has happily expressed it, wiser than all the wise and good men who had lived before us. It was their wish, to see publick and private virtues, not dissonant and jarring, and mutually destructive, but harmoniously combined, growing out of one another in a noble and orderly gradation, reciprocally supporting and supported. In one of the most fortunate periods of our history this country was governed by a *connexion*; I mean the great connexion of Whigs in the reign of Queen Anne. They were complimented upon the principle of this connexion by a poet who was in high esteem with them. Addison, who knew their sentiments, could not praise them for what they considered as no proper subject of commendation. As a poet who knew his business, he could not applaud them for a thing which in general estimation was not highly reputable. Addressing himself to Britain,

> Thy favourites grow not up by fortune's sport,
> Or from the crimes or follies of a court.
> On the firm basis of desert they rise,
> From long-try'd faith, and friendship's holy ties.

The Whigs of those days believed that the only proper method of rising into power was through hard essays of practised friendship and experimented fidelity. At that time it was not imagined, that patriotism was a bloody idol, which required the sacrifice of children and parents, or dearest connexions in private life, and of all the virtues that rise from those relations. They were not of that ingenious paradoxical morality, to imagine that a spirit of moderation was properly shewn in patiently bearing the sufferings of your friends; or that disinterestedness was clearly manifested at the expence of other people's fortune. They believed that no men could act with effect, who did not act in concert; that no man could act in concert, who did not act with confidence; that no men could act with confidence, who were not bound together by common opinions, common affections, and common interests.

These wise men, for such I must call Lord Sunderland, Lord Godolphin, Lord Somers, and Lord Marlborough, were too well principled in these maxims upon which the whole fabrick of publick strength is built, to be blown off their ground by the breath of every childish talker. They were not afraid that they should be called an ambitious Junto; or that their resolution to stand or fall together should, by placemen, be interpreted into a scuffle for places.

Party is a body of men united, for promoting by their joint endeavours the national interest, upon some particular principle in which they are all agreed. For my part, I find it impossible to conceive, that any one believes in his own politicks, or thinks them to be of any weight, who refuses to adopt the means of having them

reduced into practice. It is the business of the speculative philosopher to mark the proper ends of government. It is the business of the politician, who is the philosopher in action, to find out proper means towards those ends, and to employ them with effect. Therefore every honourable connexion will avow it is their first purpose, to pursue every just method to put the men who hold their opinions into such a condition as may enable them to carry their common plans into execution, with all the power and authority of the state. As this power is attached to certain situations, it is their duty to contend for these situations. Without a proscription of others, they are bound to give to their own party the preference in all things; and by no means, for private considerations, to accept any offers of power in which the whole body is not included; nor to suffer themselves to be led, or to be controuled, or to be overbalanced, in office or in council, by those who contradict the very fundamental principles on which their party is formed, and even those upon which every fair connexion must stand. Such a generous contention for power, on such manly and honourable maxims, will easily be distinguished from the mean and interested struggle for place and emolument. The very stile of such persons will serve to discriminate them from those numberless impostors, who have deluded the ignorant with professions incompatible with human practice, and have afterwards incensed them by practices below the level of vulgar rectitude.

It is an advantage to all narrow wisdom and narrow morals, that their maxims have a plausible air; and, on a cursory view, appear equal to first principles. They are light and portable. They are as current as copper

coin; and about as valuable. They serve equally the first capacities and the lowest; and they are, at least, as useful to the worst men as to the best. Of this stamp is the cant of *Not men, but measures*; a sort of charm by which many people get loose from every honourable engagement. When I see a man acting this desultory and disconnected part, with as much detriment to his own fortune as prejudice to the cause of any party, I am not persuaded that he is right; but I am ready to believe he is in earnest. I respect virtue in all its situations; even when it is found in the unsuitable company of weakness. I lament to see qualities, rare and valuable, squandered away without any publick utility. But when a gentleman with great visible emoluments abandons the party in which he has long acted, and tells you, it is because he proceeds upon his own judgment; that he acts on the merits of the several measures as they arise; and that he is obliged to follow his own conscience, and not that of others; he gives reasons which it is impossible to controvert, and discovers a character which it is impossible to mistake. What shall we think of him who never differed from a certain set of men until the moment they lost their power, and who never agreed with them in a single instance afterwards? Would not such a coincidence of interest and opinion be rather fortunate? Would it not be an extraordinary cast upon the dice, that a man's connexions should degenerate into faction, precisely at the critical moment when they lose their power, or he accepts a place? When people desert their connexions, the desertion is a manifest *fact*, upon which a direct simple issue lies, triable by plain men. Whether a *measure* of government be right or wrong, *is no matter*

of fact, but a mere affair of opinion, on which men may, as they do, dispute and wrangle without end. But whether the individual *thinks* the measure right or wrong, is a point at still a greater distance from the reach of all human decision. It is therefore very convenient to politicians, not to put the judgment of their conduct on overt-acts, cognizable in any ordinary court, but upon such matter as can be triable only in that secret tribunal, where they are sure of being heard with favour, or where at worst the sentence will be only private whipping.

I believe the reader would wish to find no substance in a doctrine which has a tendency to destroy all test of character as deduced from conduct. He will therefore excuse my adding something more, towards the further clearing up a point, which the great convenience of obscurity to dishonesty has been able to cover with some degree of darkness and doubt.

In order to throw an odium on political connexion, these politicians suppose it a necessary incident to it, that you are blindly to follow the opinions of your party, when in direct opposition to your own clear ideas; a degree of servitude that no worthy man could bear the thought of submitting to; and such as, I believe, no connexions (except some court factions) ever could be so senselessly tyrannical as to impose. Men thinking freely, will, in particular instances, think differently. But still as the greater part of the measures which arise in the course of publick business are related to, or dependent on, some great *leading general principles in government*, a man must be peculiarly unfortunate in the choice of his political company if he does not agree with them at least nine times in ten. If he does not concur in these

general principles upon which the party is founded, and which necessarily draw on a concurrence in their application, he ought from the beginning to have chosen some other, more conformable to his opinions. When the question is in its nature doubtful, or not very material, the modesty which becomes an individual, and (in spite of our court moralists) that partiality which becomes a well-chosen friendship, will frequently bring on an acquiescence in the general sentiment. Thus the disagreement will naturally be rare; it will be only enough to indulge freedom, without violating concord, or disturbing arrangement. And this is all that ever was required for a character of the greatest uniformity and steadiness in connexion. How men can proceed without any connexion at all, is to me utterly incomprehensible. Of what sort of materials must that man be made, how must he be tempered and put together, who can sit whole years in parliament, with five hundred and fifty of his fellow citizens, amidst the storm of such tempestuous passions, in the sharp conflict of so many wits, and tempers, and characters, in the agitation of such mighty questions, in the discussion of such vast and ponderous interests, without seeing any one sort of men, whose character, conduct, or disposition, would lead him to associate himself with them, to aid and be aided, in any one system of publick utility?

I remember an old scholastick aphorism, which says, "that the man who lives wholly detached from others, must be either an angel or a devil." When I see in any of these detached gentlemen of our times the angelick purity, power, and beneficence, I shall admit them to be angels. In the mean time we are born only to be men.

We shall do enough if we form ourselves to be good ones. It is therefore our business carefully to cultivate in our minds, to rear to the most perfect vigour and maturity, every sort of generous and honest feeling, that belongs to our nature. To bring the dispositions that are lovely in private life into the service and conduct of the commonwealth; so to be patriots, as not to forget we are gentlemen. To cultivate friendships, and to incur enmities. To have both strong, but both selected: in the one, to be placable, in the other immovable. To model our principles to our duties and our situation. To be fully persuaded, that all virtue which is impracticable is spurious; and rather to run the risk of falling into faults in a course which leads us to act with effect and energy, than to loiter out our days without blame, and without use. Publick life is a situation of power and energy; he trespasses against his duty who sleeps upon his watch, as well as he that goes over to the enemy.

There is, however, a time for all things. It is not every conjuncture which calls with equal force upon the activity of honest men; but critical exigencies now and then arise; and I am mistaken, if this be not one of them. Men will see the necessity of honest combination; but they may see it when it is too late. They may embody, when it will be ruinous to themselves, and of no advantage to the country; when, for want of such a timely union as may enable them to oppose in favour of the laws, with the laws on their side, they may at length find themselves under the necessity of conspiring, instead of consulting. The law, for which they stand, may become a weapon in the hands of its bitterest enemies; and they will be cast, at length, into that miserable alternative, between slavery and civil confusion, which no good man

can look upon without horrour; an alternative in which it is impossible he should take either part, with a conscience perfectly at repose. To keep that situation of guilt and remorse at the utmost distance is, therefore, our first obligation. Early activity may prevent late and fruitless violence. As yet we work in the light. The scheme of the enemies of publick tranquillity has disarranged, it has not destroyed us.

If the reader believes that there really exists such a faction as I have described; a faction ruling by the private inclinations of a court, against the general sense of the people; and that this faction, whilst it pursues a scheme for undermining all the foundations of our freedom, weakens (for the present at least) all the powers of executory government, rendering us abroad contemptible, and at home distracted; he will believe also, that nothing but a firm combination of publick men against this body, and that, too, supported by the hearty concurrence of the people at large, can possibly get the better of it. The people will see the necessity of restoring publick men to an attention to the publick opinion, and of restoring the constitution to its original principles. Above all, they will endeavour to keep the house of commons from assuming a character which does not belong to it. They will endeavour to keep that house, for its existence, for its powers, and its privileges, as independent of every other, and as dependent upon themselves, as possible. This servitude is to a house of commons (like obedience to the divine law) "perfect freedom." For if they once quit this natural, rational, and liberal obedience, having deserted the only proper foundation of their power, they must seek a support in an abject and unnatural dependence somewhere else.

When, through the medium of this just connexion with their constituents, the genuine dignity of the house of commons is restored, it will begin to think of casting from it, with scorn, as badges of servility, all the false ornaments of illegal power, with which it has been, for some time, disgraced. It will begin to think of its old office of CONTROUL. It will not suffer that last of evils to predominate in the country: men without popular confidence, publick opinion, natural connexion, or mutual trust, invested with all the powers of government.

When they have learned this lesson themselves, they will be willing and able to teach the court, that it is the true interest of the prince to have but one administration; and that one composed of those who recommend themselves to their sovereign through the opinion of their country, and not by their obsequiousness to a favourite. Such men will serve their sovereign with affection and fidelity; because his choice of them, upon such principles, is a compliment to their virtue. They will be able to serve him effectually; because they will add the weight of the country to the force of the executory power. They will be able to serve their king with dignity; because they will never abuse his name to the gratification of their private spleen or avarice. This, with allowances for human frailty, may probably be the general character of a ministry, which thinks itself accountable to the house of commons; when the house of commons thinks itself accountable to its constituents. If other ideas should prevail, things must remain in their present confusion; until they are hurried into all the rage of civil violence; or until they sink into the dead repose of despotism.

THE PRESENT DISCONTENTS

A. ANALYSIS OF ARGUMENT

Introduction.

Discontents in General: the statesman's duty in regard to them (pp. 1—3).

Body.

I. **The Present Discontents**: (1) their exceptional gravity (pp. 3, 4).
(2) the ministerial explanation of them is unsatisfactory (pp. 4—7).
(3) the truth is that the old tyranny of the Crown has been revived in a new form (pp. 7—11).

II. **The New Tyranny**: (1) a double cabinet (pp. 11—15).
(2) introduction of the new system (pp. 15—19).
(3) how recommended (pp. 19—25).
(4) the party supporting it (pp. 25—35).
(5) the new system is at variance with the spirit of our constitution (pp. 35—40).
(6) refutation of argument that the King cannot ascertain the real voice of the people (pp. 41—44).

III. **Disastrous effects of the New System**: (1) on the executive in foreign and in colonial affairs (pp. 44—48).
(2) on the temper of the people at home (pp. 48—50).
(3) on the Crown (pp. 51—56).
(4) on parliament: (*a*) its original character perverted (pp. 56—60); (*b*) loss of control over executive (pp. 60—62); (*c*) tampering with freedom of election (pp. 62—74); (*d*) surrendering right of appropriation (pp. 74—82); (*e*) remedies (pp. 82—88).

IV. **Interposition of the people**: electors and representatives, especially in regard to party (pp. 88—91).

Conclusion.

A Defence of party (pp. 91—102) and

A call to arms (pp. 102, 103).

B. SUMMARY OF PAMPHLET

To investigate the causes of public disorders is difficult and dangerous, but duty bids us run the risk; and, if we discover a remedy, we do a service to government. For government rests, not on law or force, but on the ruler's knowledge of a nation's temper and his management of it. This temper the statesman should study, and thus be able to discriminate between the general infirmity of human nature to complain, and those complaints which are symptomatic of a particular time and place (pp. 1—3).

The present conjuncture is particularly alarming. Neither government nor law nor rank nor office is respected. Foreign affairs, colonial affairs, home affairs, are in confusion. All is chaos —both in and out of parliament. This is the more extraordinary since the great political parties are dissolved; and since we suffer from neither plague nor famine, from no taxation new or oppressive, from no unsuccessful war (pp. 3, 4).

According to ministers, this disorder arises, not from any mismanagement of theirs, but from the insolence of the wealthy and the boldness of the poor worked upon by libellers and disappointed politicians. Such an explanation is absurd. It simply means "a good ministry, a very bad people." And consequently there can be no remedy; for nobody has yet proposed to destroy our wealth, to cut our colonies adrift, to abolish liberty by despotism. Unhappy, then, are the rulers of so perverse a people. For strong measures never allay discontents arising from the perversity of the people any more than from the mismanagement of the government. It is not true that the people are never in the wrong; but they are as often in the right as the rulers. Nay more, popular discontents generally spring from a faulty constitution or from misgovernment. Besides, that the rulers, not the people, are to blame is, if not a more probable, at least a more comfortable, theory; for it is easier to change an administration than to reform a people (pp. 4—7).

But, after all, we have a grievance—different, it is true, from that of former times; and, while men are rarely mistaken in feeling a grievance, few can rightly explain it. The enemies of freedom are still alive, though they no longer try to destroy it in the old way. The existence of parliament is no longer in danger; parliament is now to be the tool of tyranny. The power of the Crown is

dead as prerogative; but has revived, stronger, less odious but not less dangerous, under the name of influence (pp. 7—11).

After the Revolution of 1688, the Crown delegated part of its powers to the nobles or to men popular with the country. These ministers, however, were not submissive enough to the Court favourites; and the aim is to give the Court and it alone complete use of Court influence, and to govern without the concurrence of the people. The new device was for the King to choose the prime minister, and the Earl of Bute was appointed, a man little known and of little repute, whom all must submit to. But this change was too sudden; and a more gradual method of securing absolute authority was devised. There was to be a double cabinet—the one secret, powerful, irresponsible; the other merely executive, responsible but powerless. The real masters were to command a Court faction sharing in government emoluments but independent of the ostensible administration. The great political parties were to be destroyed. Ministers were no longer to lead and be supported by one or other of the great parties. Instead, any person, however unimportant was to receive parliamentary support, simply as the King's nominee, while parliament was to acquiesce in the substitution of a secret Court cabal for an open national government. Royal favour alone would give power and continue it. All would in time submit in everything to the King's will (pp. 11—15).

The young King, at his accession in 1760, had many advantages. He could claim the throne by hereditary right: no ties bound him closely to Hanover: he was born a Briton: the Pretender and his cause were alike contemptible: the country was victorious in war. While these advantages inspired him to maintain our freedom, they incited others to grasp power previously unattainable. Pitt and his supporters in the government happened to be on bad terms with Newcastle and his. The Court cabal got rid of Pitt, which rather pleased the Newcastle party. But their turn came next. In fact, their dismissal was more necessary than Pitt's. For the Whigs, so loyal to the Hanoverians, were strong through long possession of office, wealth, party connexion and mutual obligation, ties of blood and alliance. Their whole party and their dependents were proscribed, the humblest deprived of the humblest office. For it must be made manifest that only one source of power existed—Court favour. With the fall of Pitt and the Whigs, the only securities vanished that the people had for their importance (pp. 15—19).

To recommend this transformation, a new heaven upon earth was promised. Party with all its evils would disappear: a Court virtuous beyond compare would step forward: the royal bounty would flow freely to the people from a throne now restored to its pristine splendour. Nothing, it was declared, could save the constitution from destruction either by the rabble or by an aristocratic faction except to free the throne from the ministerial tyranny that hemmed in George II. Yet the history of George II's reign shows that a King is not necessarily in servitude merely because he must sacrifice private inclination to public interest. Nor is it true that the House of Lords encroached on the Crown rights and would upset the balance of the constitution. In reality, the Court party's agents sought to frighten the peers with the bogy of mob-government and the people with the bogy of aristocratic tyranny, simply in order to disunite the orders of the state and open the way to the wicked men who have engrossed the royal power (pp. 19—25).

The royal influence which formerly supported ministers in carrying out public business, is now intercepted by this new cabal, which controls and weakens the administration. All parties have in turn been duped into forming administrations, supported for a time, then thwarted, disgraced, and turned out. The members of the Court cabal are not in high responsible offices, but in subordinate departments or in the royal household. They have power, they hold office for life. They are unassailable, and independent. Such are the "King's Friends." The system of exterior and interior administrations is the double cabinet. It was intermitted during the Rockingham ministry, which sought to govern without the concurrence of the Court, to break up the cabal, and to return to the former principles. The Rockingham ministry was accordingly got rid of. It may be asked why Bute is not attacked. The cabal would have arisen whether he had existed or not. And what will help us is not to rail at Bute, but to combine firmly against this system. Our constitution is, in great part, popular; and this infusion of favouritism is unnatural and a grievance. This system abuses the King's power in forming a ministry, so that while the letter of the law is not violated, the spirit of the constitution is (pp. 25—35).

Favouritism is at variance with our plan of legislature, for our government by Lords and Commons as well as by King is meant as a check upon the King; and the King's discretionary power (*e.g.* in

regard to the execution of laws, nomination to office, etc.) is meant to be exercised on public principles and national grounds, not on the likes or the intrigues of a Court cabal. It matters a great deal who carries out the laws. In a free state, where legislation is by general consent, the executive must consist of persons whom the people can trust. We do not actually elect our magistrates, but parliament has had the right to refuse support to ministers not acceptable to the people. Every good state should be able to exclude bad ministers, and not merely punish them for wrong-doing. Only tried men should receive office. The new system, however, seeks to put into power untried men, or men found unworthy, or men otherwise unsuitable, on the plea that the King thinks proper to appoint them. It is contrary to the spirit of our constitution, and also dangerous to the national interests, that Court favour should be the road to power (pp. 35—40).

But how can the King discover who is acceptable to the people? He finds, it is objected, extreme difficulty in distinguishing the voice of the people from the clamour of faction. It is better for the King to appoint whom he considers best. This difficulty does exist. Government is no easy task; and, if we wait till everybody is satisfied, we shall never have a government. But without elaborate search the King will find ministers who give a great deal of content to the people. And at this conjuncture the best men in the nation, of all ranks, should interpose and save their King, themselves, and their posterity. As long as the present system continues, all will be in confusion. Either the system will destroy the constitution, or the constitution must overcome the system (pp. 41—44).

Other systems destructive of a country's liberty may enhance its reputation; but this has paralysed the executive. The cabal knows that war will show the importance of popular support; and they avoid war. Consequently, foreign nations flout British authority and violate treaties. Our colonies neither trust nor fear us. Alternately rash and timid, firm and weak, the cabal has already alienated them (pp. 44—48).

Affairs at home are in the utmost confusion. The people have no confidence in the administration. Tyranny working by the machinery of a free state increases their discontent. Riots ensue. Military force is employed; and, in addition, one mob is hired to destroy another—a method which intensifies at once the boldness of the populace and their discontent (pp. 48—50).

Moreover, the scheme has failed in its professed aim—to free the King from the shackles of faction. The ample revenues of the Crown have been diverted to support the Court faction, and the King is reduced to poverty. Neither is he freed from the hardship of accepting ministers personally disagreeable to him. Matters are even worse; for odious inferiors now bear rule. Nor yet is the King's leisure any more peaceful. His feelings are hurt, his private life is rendered unhappy. The King's worst enemies have been the "King's Friends." Mere office-holders and pension-drawers, slippery sycophants—may no storm arise to put their attachment to the proof (pp. 51—56).

The new system aimed particularly at changing the House of Commons from a national council to a subservient instrument of the Court. The House of Commons was originally no part of the standing government, but a body specially summoned from the people and specially representative of their feelings and opinions. It was intended not to control the people but to be a control by the people. Its duties were to watch the executive, to care for public money, to be open to public complaint. Its perversion is seen in its indiscriminate support of all ministers and consequent loss of control; in its interference with freedom of election, whereby it destroys its own legal authority and source (pp. 56—60).

The annual meeting of parliament since 1688, and the introduction of the Septennial Act have made the House of Commons more of a standing senate. Under the cabal parliament has shared in every important act of government, and thus has lost control over the executive (pp. 60—62).

The King's Friends have actually attempted to alter the right of election by giving the House of Commons the power of arbitrarily debarring any one from his seat in parliament and admitting in his place one not chosen by the electors or according to law. Wilkes was excluded not as punishment for his indecent writings but simply because he opposed the Court cabal and was a popular favourite. Victory for the Court party on this point will establish a precedent that for a seat in the House the favour of the people is not so sure a guarantee as the favour of the Court. In the House of Commons zeal for liberty and popular rights was punished not merely by law but also by discretionary proceedings, involving the loss of control through representatives. When defence of popular rights is thus penalized, no man can be expected to serve the people firmly and

faithfully. The House of Commons can control the other parts of the government only if the constituencies control the House and possess an indefeasible right in the choice of representatives. Representation is no legal fiction. The representative must be the person chosen and trusted by the electors. This contest, however, is in reality between the Crown and the electors. When members discover that ministers can disqualify and that popular opinion does not count, they will yield to Court influence. Ministers unconnected with the people must have a parliament unconnected with the people; and the House of Commons had to be made master of the constituencies (pp. 62—74).

To make the Court completely despotic, it was necessary to destroy "appropriations of revenue." Without the authority of parliament, debts had been incurred, much in excess of the Civil List. No explanation was given by ministers and no accounts were submitted. Yet the House of Commons paid the debts, thus surrendering the right to examine accounts before payment and losing all check on expenditure. This precedent will allow ministers to exceed the Civil List to any amount. The Sinking Fund can be plundered to an unlimited extent—to the detriment of national credit, public morals, and the constitution. The cabal has now the command of unlimited funds to employ as it chooses (pp. 74—82).

Two remedies have been suggested, but neither will avail. To shorten parliaments will, by making elections more frequent, simply increase the disorders of election times. Then, the more frequent elections are, the more ruinous will they be to independent candidates, since government candidates will have ample supplies of money. Men of experience are against shortening. Nor will it prove a remedy to deprive place men of seats in parliament. That will be a dangerous experiment. Certain officials might well be disqualified, but the great heads of departments should have an interest, even a corrupt interest, in the Constitution. Otherwise, they may seek to destroy it. Better, too, is the open influence of places, than the secret influence of contracts and other underhand ways of bribery. The only remedy is the interposition of the people (pp. 82—88).

The people must carefully scrutinize the conduct of their representatives, and discover who support all administrations indiscriminately—administrations depending solely on the humours of the Court and, therefore, weak and unworthy. For no man of spirit or

ability or worth will accept office to be the Court's slave and to be dismissed if not submissive. Such worthless ministers are neither obeyed nor respected. The touchstone of true statesmen must be willingness to destroy the power of the King's men. Voting for any administration that obeys the King's men should be marked as culpable in members. The readiness of members to change sides and their infidelity to party connexion should also be noted. For the cabal seeks to destroy all honourable party connexion (pp. 88—91).

The cabal denounces party connexion as by nature factious. All unconstitutional statesmen do so, for the union of party is effective in discovering and opposing unconstitutional designs. Alone, the greatest man is unserviceable: in a party, the weakest man is valuable. A public man must do more than mean well and do well. He must put himself in a position to defeat what is wrong and to make the right predominate. Party, it is true, has faults—a narrow, bigoted, and proscriptive spirit; a tendency to sink the general good in the party's. But we may avoid these without ceasing to be good party men. Ties of party do not any more than ties of family or religion weaken the bonds of patriotism. Party connexions have been highly esteemed in other countries and at other times. Solon made neutrality a crime. The Romans laid great stress on the connexions in offices of state; and regarded private honour as the strongest foundation of public trust. Further, let us not seek to be wiser than our ancestors. Under Queen Anne, the country was ruled by the renowned Whig junto of Sunderland, Godolphin, Somers and Marlborough. They held effective action to come from concerted action, based on mutual confidence springing from common opinions, common affections, common interests. "Party is a body of men united, for promoting by their joint endeavours the national interest, upon some particular principle in which they are all agreed." The members seek by every just method to get their party into power so that their plans may be executed. Such rivalry is easily distinguishable from a mean, selfish struggle for place and emolument. The opponents of party frequently parade as a virtue that they support "not men but measures." This is the veriest claptrap—a device to get loose from honourable engagements; as in the case of a man who deserts his party when it loses power, and avers that he is supporting measures. He is certainly guilty of the fact of desertion: whether he is sincere or not in what he thinks about

measures, we cannot tell. A party man need not blindly follow his party against his own clear ideas. Since most public measures deal with some leading general principles, a man will usually agree with his party, else he has made a bad choice of party. On minor or doubtful points, where he thinks differently, modesty will lead him to concur with the majority. Actual disagreement will be rare, and without disturbance to the party. He must be a strange composition who can for years mingle in the storm and stress of parliament and not find others of kindred mind to associate with, for mutual help in some system of public utility. Such a solitary must, according to the aphorism, be either an angel or a devil. We, however, are born to be men. We should make ourselves good men, and bring the goodness of private life into public life. And now is the time for good men to combine in defence of the laws, with the laws on their side. Delay may force them to conspire, to accept civil war as the only alternative to slavery (pp. 91—102).

Granted that such a cabal exists as here described, it must be crushed. The old order must be restored. The King is best served by a ministry accountable to the House of Commons as it is accountable to the people. Otherwise, the present confusion cannot fail to end either in civil war or in despotism (pp. 102, 103).

NOTES

Burke placed on his title page the following quotation from Cicero: "Hoc vero occultum, intestinum, [ac] domesticum malum non modo non existit, verum etiam opprimit antequam perspicere atque explorare potueris" (*in Verrem Actio Secunda*, I. xv. 39). "But this hidden evil in the heart of a man's own household not only remains invisible but also surprises him before he can watch and reconnoitre." Cicero is here referring to the flagrant treachery of Verres to the praetor Carbo, to whom he was bound as quaestor by the most sacred of ties (see note to *necessitudo sortis*, p. 94). The quotation suggests similar treachery in the Court and the House of Commons. Instead of defending, they had betrayed the nation. "A man's foes shall be they of his own household."

Page 1

come near to: touch, offend, wound the feelings of.

favourites of the people. Wilkes was the popular favourite at the time. Pitt had been popular till he accepted a peerage. But there may be no particular allusion either here, or in "persons of weight," which has been explained as referring to the King.

our law has invested every man, etc. Except clergymen, all grown men, if physically fit, are bound by law to attend magistrates in suppressing riots.

in some sort: in a manner, fashion. So on p. 64.

private people, etc. Though a member of parliament at this time, Burke speaks as a private person and appeals to the spirit of the law he has referred to as justifying his action. Similarly in *Conciliation with America*, he apologizes because, though not a member of the executive, he hazards plans of government; and he defends his action by saying, "Public calamity is a mighty leveller; and there are occasions when any, even the slightest, chance of doing good, must be laid hold on, even by the most inconsiderable person."

Page 2

liberally: in no narrow-minded fashion, but with broad minds, unprejudiced.

cause of government: not the administration in office (which Burke here calls "the rulers of the day") but governance, the opposite of anarchy or lawlessness.

subject: not a single individual but the whole body of the people. That is, the word is used collectively, as on p. 81. It may be similarly employed below, pp. 9 and 23; but in these passages it may be the singular for the plural.

the abstract value...people. Burke is not discussing here the value of popular opinion in general, apart from particular instances. As a matter of fact, he did not rate it high, he did not shout "vox populi, vox dei." See p. 3, "the ignorance and levity of the vulgar"; and p. 41, "Besides that the opinion of the mere vulgar is a miserable rule even with regard to themselves, on account of their violence and instability." Nor did he mean by the people, what politicians now mean. "I have often," he says (*Regicide Peace*, Letter I), "endeavoured to compute and to class those who, in any political view, are to be called the people....In England and Scotland I compute that those of adult age, not declining in life, of tolerable leisure for such (*i.e.* political) discussions, and of some means of information, more or less, and who are above menial dependence (or what virtually is such) may amount to about four hundred thousand....This is the British public." Burke frequently runs tilt at abstract statements and ideas, as in *Conciliation with America*, "Abstract liberty, like other mere abstractions, is not to be found. Liberty inheres in some sensible object."

reputation, the most precious possession: alluding to the well-known passage in Shakespeare, *Othello*, III. iii. 155 *sqq*.

> "Good name in man and woman, dear my lord,
> Is the immediate jewel of their souls:
> * * *
> But he that filches from me my good name
> Robs me of that which not enriches him
> And makes me poor indeed."

Nations are not primarily, etc. Compare "Obedience is what makes government" (*Conciliation with America*); and below, p. 85, "The same principle," etc.

Page 3

levity of the vulgar: the fickleness of the common people. See note to p. 2.

distemperature: distempered, disordered condition. It is a metaphor from inclement weather or climate. Elsewhere, as p. 44, Burke uses *distemper*=political disorder. *Distemperature* is now obsolete.

solemn plausibilities: formal or ceremonious points deserving approval.

domestick economy: home affairs as distinct from foreign or colonial affairs. The same phrase occurs on p. 48; "interiour economy," p. 51; "domestick arrangement," p. 44.

disconnexion and confusion. In public life brother opposed brother, friend friend, colleague colleague.

Page 4

the great parties: Whigs and Tories. After the Revolution the vital difference between the two parties gradually disappeared, though the names remained as political labels. In the years immediately before the time when Burke was writing this, those who called themselves Whigs had split into groups. Compare what the writer of *Seasonable Hints* (see note to p. 19) says—"Does any candid and intelligent man seriously believe that at this time there subsists any party distinction amongst us that is not merely nominal? Are not the Tories friends of the royal family? Have they not long ago laid aside their aversion to the Dissenters? Do they not think the Toleration and Establishment both necessary parts of the Constitution? and can a Whig distinguish these from his own principles?"

Speculation: theory; as on pp. 9, 83, and 85. To express the same idea *hypothesis* is used, p. 5.

immense wealth, etc. We find numerous references to this accumulation of money, especially in the case of those who had returned from India with huge fortunes—the Nabobs. See Macaulay's *Clive*; and Lecky's *History of England in the Eighteenth Century*, III. 171 *sq.*, ed. 1882. In a speech of 1770, Chatham said, "For some years past there has been an influx of wealth into this country which has been attended with many fatal consequences, because it has not been the regular, natural produce of labour and industry. The riches of Asia have been poured in upon us, and

have brought with them not only Asiatic luxury, but, I fear, Asiatic principles of government. Without connections, without any natural interest in the soil, the importers of foreign gold have forced their way into Parliament by such a torrent of private corruption as no private hereditary fortune could resist."

Page 5

libellers. Many libels had been lately published, the most important being the series of letters signed "Junius," which began in the *Public Advertiser*, 21st January, 1769. "Junius" supplies many illustrations to passages in the *Discontents*.

parts: abilities (archaic sense).

to introduce poverty, as a constable: not the modern police-constable, but the old parish constable, dating from the thirteenth century, and charged with the conservation of the peace of the parish. Cromwell once designated himself "a good constable set to keep the peace of the parish." Burke has another reference to this employment of poverty: "It is, in truth, nothing more than the old, and, as I thought, exploded problem of tyranny, which proposes to beggar its subjects into submission" (*Conciliation with America*).

Page 6

untoward: perverse, obstinate, refractory; perhaps a reminiscence of "this untoward generation," Acts ii. 40.

fermentable: liable to fermentation, easily excited. The metaphor is continued by the word *leaven* = what is added to dough to make it ferment; some influence that permeates and transforms. Compare, "The kingdom of heaven is like unto leaven, which a woman took, and hid in three measures of meal, till the whole was leavened," Matt. xiii. 33.

in all disputes, etc. Compare "I am compelled to recollect, that, in my little reading upon such contests as these, the sense of mankind has, at least, as often decided against the superior as the subordinate power" (*Conciliation with America*).

Page 7

Les révolutions, etc. The revolutions that take place in the great states are not the result of chance, or of the caprice of the peoples. Nothing rouses the great men of a kingdom like a weak

and distempered government. As for the rabble, they never rise from a passion to attack, but from impatience of suffering.

a minister of state: Maximilien de Bethune, Duke of Sully (1560—1641), minister of Henry IV of France.

system of favouritism: a hint that the present favouritism of George III (see p. 35) would have equally dreadful consequences. And yet Bute, who bore the greatest resemblance to Henry III's favourites, is treated gently by Burke (see p. 33).

the trustees of power: the rulers who have power as a trust and who are thus responsible for the just use of that power. Burke is fond of this idea. Compare p. 58, "The king is the representative of the people; so are the lords; so are the judges. They are all trustees for the people, as well as the commons; because no power is given for the sole sake of the holder"; p. 63, "popular trusts"; and *Revolution in France*, "All persons possessing any portion of power ought to be strongly and awfully impressed with an idea that they act in trust; and that they are to account for their conduct in that trust to the one great master, author and founder of society."

more comfortable: more satisfactory (obsolete sense).

the cause: the case, as if it were a lawsuit.

fashionable in some fashionable companies: current, as being the proper thing to say, in gatherings of the upper classes. Note the play on the two senses of *fashionable*.

Page 8

as those: in sense and construction to be taken closely with *as material*, two lines above.

speculation: speculating, theorizing.

digesting: arranging and classifying, disposing methodically.

event: outcome, result. So p. 62.

to be a Whig on the business, etc. Compare Macaulay in *The Earl of Chatham* (Second Essay): "The Whig, who, during three Parliaments, had never given one vote against the court, and who was ready to sell his soul for the Comptroller's staff or for the Great Wardrobe, still professed to draw his political doctrines from Locke and Milton, still worshipped the memory of Pym and Hampden, and would still, on the thirtieth of January, take his glass, first to the man in the mask, and then to the man who would do it without the mask." Space as well as time enables contrary opinions to be

reconciled. See J. Russell Lowell's satire, *The Pious Editor's Creed*, on those Americans who advocated Parisian liberty but refused emancipation to the American slaves:

"I du believe in Freedom's cause,
Ez fur away ez Payris is;
I love to see her stick her claws
In them infarnal Phayrisees;
It's wal enough agin a king
To dror resolves an' triggers—
But libbaty's a kind o' thing
Thet don't agree with niggers."

an hundred. Note the difference from the modern use of the indefinite article. So *an useful*, p. 12. The 1770 editions have also *an house*, *an happier*, etc. Dr Johnson in his *Dictionary*, 1755, says, "Grammarians of the last age direct that *an* should be used with *h*."

historical patriotism: patriotism merely of the past, and apart from present events; what Burke means when (*Revolution in France*) he says, "You will be wise historically, a fool in practice."

Page 9

many a stern republican, etc. See note to p. 8; and compare "Almost all the high-bred republicans of my time have, after a short space, become the most decided, thorough-paced courtiers" (*Revolution in France*).

gorging. This plain, blunt word—like *coarsest work and homeliest job*—is meant to increase the scorn of the sentence.

Saxon constitution. A rosy picture had been painted of the constitution before the Norman Conquest to prove that our popular right and liberties went back to very early times. We are all familiar with the fiction that the jury-system was instituted by King Alfred. A cartoon in the Houses of Parliament keeps this belief alive. Burke has elsewhere ridiculed "our true Saxon constitution."

splendid bile: flaming passion, from Horace's *splendida bilis*, *Satires* II. iii. 141. The bile was supposed to cause a choleric temperament.

King James...the last King James: James II.

complaisance: disposition to oblige, to show deference.

prejudice: injury, detriment. So also in phrase "without prejudice."

furniture: equipment, trappings.

ship-money...**Forest laws.** Charles I revived both (1634—1637) during the time when he attempted to rule without a parliament. See Histories.

PAGE 10

usufruct...**fee and inheritance**: the right of enjoying the use and advantages of another's property...the right of absolute ownership and of handing on to one's heirs. Burke means a member of the Commons will sell his vote to ministers when they require his support: he will not part with it absolutely. The Roman poet Lucretius employs the same antithesis in regard to life,

> "vitaque mancipio nulli datur, omnibus usu,"
>
> *de Rerum Natura*, III. 971,

which Munro translates, "life is granted to none in fee-simple, to all in usufruct."

PAGE 11

Prerogative: the unrestricted rights of the sovereign: "the discretionary power of acting for the public good where the positive laws are silent." The Stewarts claimed extensive powers for the Sovereign under the name of prerogative. Of the few that now remain, granting a free pardon is perhaps the most familiar; and even it is much restricted and regularly delegated to a minister of the Crown.

Influence: the power the King could exercise by giving or withholding or withdrawing pensions, posts, honours, etc.

antagonist: the House of Commons.

antiquated prejudices: unreasonable beliefs now old-fashioned; as the Divine Right of Kings.

stamina: framework, constitution. This word is the plural of the Latin *stamen*, warp, thread. The modern use of *stamina* is as a singular in the sense of staying power, power of endurance.

infallible: sure, certain, not liable to fail.

PAGE 12

strength natural and acquired: compare below, "great natural interest or great acquired confidence." The word *natural* refers to the great Whig nobles, while *acquired* means William Pitt.

mortmain: the condition of lands or tenements held inalienably by ecclesiastical or other corporations. In Scots Law the

corresponding term is mortification. The word *mortmain* is Old French *mortemain*, from mediæval Latin *mortua manus*, dead hand.

Page 13

Frederick Prince of Wales. His quarrels with George II, especially in and after 1737, led the opposition to Walpole to gather round him. See Histories, and Macaulay, *William Pitt, Earl of Chatham* (First Essay). Frederick was a worthless prince, about whom, when he died in 1751, the following sarcastic epitaph was written—

"Here lies Fred,
Who was alive and is dead.
Had it been his father,
I had much rather.
Had it been his brother,
Still better than another.
Had it been his sister,
No one would have missed her.
Had it been the whole generation,
Still better for the nation.
But since 'tis only Fred,
Who was alive and is dead,
There's no more to be said."

a person, in rank indeed respectable, etc.: John Stuart, Earl of Bute. See Histories; and compare Macaulay, *The Earl of Chatham* (Second Essay)—"The Earl of Bute was scarcely known, even by name, to the country which he was soon to govern. He had indeed, a short time after he came of age, been chosen to fill a vacancy which, in the middle of a parliament, had taken place among the Scotch representative peers. He had disobliged the Whig ministers by giving some silent votes with the Tories, and consequently lost his seat at the next dissolution, and had never been re-elected. Near twenty years had elapsed since he had borne any part in politics. He had passed some of those years at his seat in one of the Hebrides, and from that retirement he had emerged as one of the household of Prince Frederic. Lord Bute, excluded from public life, had found out many ways of amusing his leisure. He was a tolerable actor in private theatricals, and was particularly successful in the part of Lothario. A handsome leg, to which both painters and satirists took care to give prominence, was among his

chief qualifications for the stage. He devised quaint dresses for masquerades. He dabbled in geometry, mechanics, and botany. He paid some attention to antiquities and works of art, and was considered in his own circle as a judge of painting, architecture, and poetry....On the whole, the Earl of Bute might fairly be called a man of cultivated mind. He was also a man of undoubted honour. But his understanding was narrow, and his manners cold and haughty. His qualifications for the part of a statesman were best described by Frederic, who often indulged in the unprincely luxury of sneering at his dependents. 'Bute,' said his Royal Highness, 'you are the very man to be envoy at some small proud German court where there is nothing to do.'" Note Burke's use of *respectable* = deserving respect, high. So on p. 31.

But whether...abandoned. Bute was Prime Minister from May 1762 to April 1763. The reason of his resignation is not clear. It may have been his immense unpopularity, or his incompetence to manage a government, or both. A general idea of the time was that he preferred a favourite's irresponsible power to a minister's responsibility and danger.

instrumental part: the means by which the new policy was to be carried out. This alteration is the "reformed plan," which Burke describes in the next few paragraphs.

Page 14

in the real secret and confidence: *i.e.* the King's.

executory: executive. So p. 26 and elsewhere.

connexions: ties of party.

Page 15

Points of honour: matters regarded as vitally affecting one's honour.

decorum: etiquette, fit and proper behaviour or procedure.

in a Turkish army. In parliament no consideration of honour or rank was to count, but all were to be on a dead level unless elevated by the King's word, as in Turkey with its absence of hereditary nobility the Sultan's fiat is all-prevailing. Then (see two lines below) as Lord Holland said, "The King may make a page first minister."

the first name for rank or wisdom: the Duke of Newcastle ("rank"), William Pitt ("wisdom"). Compare p. 17, "from natural influence or from honourable service."

cabal: clique, faction. For the same company Burke employs *faction* (p. 17), *junto* (p. 27), *Court corporation* (p. 32), *Court corps* (p. 91). The word *cabal* is from French *cabale*, from mediaeval Latin *cabala*, Jewish oral tradition, mystic interpretation, occult lore, from Hebrew *qabbalah*. "The Cabal" in English history was the notorious combination in the reign of Charles II—Clifford, Arlington, Buckingham, Ashley, and Lauderdale. The initials of these names happened to spell *cabal*, and this was for long regarded as its origin. The word, however, occurs in English writings earlier than Charles II's reign; though naturally its meaning has been influenced by the coincidence discovered by the wits between the spelling and the initials of the five statesmen.

closet: the room for private interviews. See p. 25, "a back-stairs influence and clandestine government."

capital: main, important, chief, leading. In this sense the word is now less widely employed, though we still say "the capital city." See pp. 78 and 86.

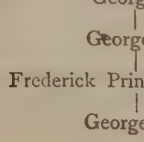
holdings: lands, tenements, especially held under a superior. The word is metaphorically used to indicate the "strength natural and acquired" (p. 12) held by certain men in the country. This was no longer to be held of their old superior, the people, but of the royal favour. The figure is continued below in the word *tenure*.

the motive: to gain the King's favour.

the dead letter: a law allowed to fall into disuse, to become inoperative, though not formally repealed.

Page 16

Fourth in descent, and third in succession. Compare *Conciliation with America*, "when in the fourth generation the third Prince of the House of Brunswick had sat twelve years on the throne." George III's father died before George II, and so, as the following table shows, George III was "fourth in descent and third in succession."



the zealots of hereditary right: the Tories. See Histories and Macaulay, *The Earl of Chatham* (Second Essay).

The person and cause, etc. See Histories. Lecky (*History*, III. 18) says: "The Pretender was at once a foreigner and a Papist, with few or no English tastes, and sunk, according to common report, in habitual drunkenness." Compare Erskine May's *Constitutional History*, I. 8, ed. 1861: "Few could be suspected of adherence to the fallen cause of the Stuarts, which had been hopelessly abandoned since the rebellion of 1745."

habitudes: associations, intimacies. See pp. 92 and 94.

revenue for the civil establishment: £800,000 a year. See p. 78.

additions from conquest: Minorca; Canada, Cape Breton Island, Florida, the right to cut logwood in Honduras; the islands of Tobago, St Vincent, Dominica and Grenada; all the conquests in India except Pondicherry; Senegal.

reversionary hope: hope of reward if opposition to the Hanoverian sovereign brought back the Stewarts. The word *reversionary* is a legal term. Reversion is the right to possession or enjoyment of property when the present holder relinquishes it.

inspired his majesty, etc. Burke is careful to deal gently with the King, and yet George III was the chief mover in the scheme to regain power for the sovereign.

Page 17

popular opinion...party connexion. The first belonged to Pitt, the second to Newcastle. See p. 15, where these two are referred to, and p. 19.

tenure. See p. 15, note to *holdings*.

disgust: antipathy, aversion; not in the stronger sense of loathing. So p. 53. Similarly in *American Taxation* Burke has "The Honourable Gentleman has made one endeavour to diversify the form of this disgusting argument," where *disgusting* is simply wearisome, tedious.

to ruin his character. See Macaulay, *The Earl of Chatham* (Second Essay): "The same Gazette which announced the retirement of the Secretary of State announced also that, in consideration of his great public services, his wife had been created a peeress in her own right, and that a pension of three thousand pounds a year, for three lives, had been bestowed on himself. It was doubtless

thought that the rewards and honours conferred on the great minister would have a conciliatory effect on the public mind. Perhaps, too, it was thought that his popularity, which had partly arisen from the contempt which he had always shown for money, would be damaged by a pension; and, indeed, a crowd of libels instantly appeared, in which he was accused of having sold his country....The courtiers had adopted a mode of warfare, which was soon turned with far more formidable effect against themselves. Half the inhabitants of the Grub Street garrets paid their milk scores, and got their shirts out of pawn, by abusing Pitt. His German war, his subsidies, his pension, his wife's peerage, were shin of beef and gin, blankets and baskets of small coal, to the starving poetasters of the Fleet."

rather pleased. "Newcastle," says Lecky (*History*, III. 36), "was filled with a delight which he took little pains to conceal."

their own fall. Pitt resigned in October 1761, and Newcastle in the following May.

PAGE 18

humour: caprice. So p. 41.

criminal and devoted: *i.e.* in the eyes of the cabal. The word *devoted* here means doomed to destruction.

how various soever. *Soever* is sometimes added to *how*; sometimes separated from it, as here.

proper: in the archaic sense of belonging to, practically reduplicates and emphasizes *own*. So p. 59.

a proscription so general, etc. "All the partisans of Newcastle were at once driven from office, and some of the most prominent men in the country were treated with an arrogance that recalled the worst days of the Stuarts. The Duke of Devonshire was expelled from the office of Chamberlain with circumstances of the grossest insult. The King refused even to see him on the occasion, and with his own hand struck his name from the list of Privy Councillors. The Dukes of Newcastle and Grafton, and the Marquis of Rockingham, were deprived of the Lord-Lieutenancies of their counties....A persecution as foolish as it was harsh was directed by Fox against the humblest officials who had been appointed or recommended by Whig statesmen, or were in any way connected with them. Clerks, tide-waiters, and excisemen were included in the proscription. The widow of an admiral who was distantly

connected with the Duke of Devonshire, a poor man who had been rewarded for bravery against smugglers at the recommendation of the Duke of Grafton, a schoolboy who was a nephew of Legge, were among those who were deprived of places, pensions, or reversions" (Lecky, *History*, III. 57 *sq.*). Compare Macaulay, *The Earl of Chatham* (Second Essay).

Page 19

all dependencies but one: all except dependence on the Court. Note the form *dependency*, which now is restricted to the meaning of something (especially a county or province, as p. 35) dependent upon another. See p. 26.

a few individuals were left: Northington, Granville, Bedford, Halifax, Egremont, Grenville, and Henry Fox remained in office under Bute.

odious, *i.e.* to the Court party.

religiously kept their faith: said ironically. False to party and to friends, they have been conscientiously true to Bute and the Court.

prudery: affected propriety.

soused: plunged. This vigorous word meant originally put in pickle. See p. 97.

indirect: underhand, wrong. The indirect practices are bribery, intimidation and all unjust influence.

pamphlet: the exact title of which is *Seasonable Hints from an Honest Man on the new Reign and the new Parliament*. It appeared in 1761 and was written by William Pulteney, Earl of Bath, Walpole's most formidable opponent. It denounced the Whig oligarchy as "putting the sovereign in leading-strings," and recommended the King "to break all factious connections and confederacies, to abolish the proscription of the Tories, and thus terminate the reign of corruption." See Lecky, *History*, III. 22 *sq.*

Page 20

managed: well handled, carefully controlled.

regards: considerations, motives.

king's men. See p. 56.

a perspective view. A perspective meant one or other of various optical devices to produce optical illusions, as in Shakespeare: *All's Well*, v. iii. 48; *Twelfth Night*, v. i. 224; *Richard II*, II. ii. 18.

Here it evidently means a picture painted on glass and shown off by a bright illumination at the back.

Atè. In Greek mythology Atè (ἄτη, bewilderment, infatuation) was the goddess of mischief, leading gods as well as men into rash, inconsiderate actions. Having led Zeus to take a rash oath, she was hurled from Olympus.

Power was thenceforward, etc. Those in power were to be reckoned the pure, unselfish, upright, public-spirited statesmen, while to be in disgrace at Court was a sign that a man was a prey to all vices and corruptions.

visionary republick of Plato: the ideal commonwealth set forth by the Greek philosopher Plato.

constantly: invariably, uniformly, regularly, in every case. On p. 21 the word has the meaning of continually, perpetually, in "was constantly in the mouths."

talking prose. They now imagined themselves possessed of qualities hitherto unsuspected. The allusion in "talking prose all their lives" is to M. Jourdain in Molière's *Bourgeois Gentilhomme.* This worthy man had come into a fortune and wished to acquire accomplishments fitting him to mix with the upper classes. He asked his tutor the difference between prose and verse, and, when shown an example of prose, "On my soul," he cried, "I've been talking prose for more than forty years without knowing anything of the matter."

PAGE 21

infamously monopolized. "During the last two reigns," said Lord Melcombe to Bute, "a set of undertakers...under colour of making themselves responsible for the whole have taken the sole direction of the royal interest and influence into their own hands and applied it to their own creatures without consulting the Crown or leaving any room for the royal nomination."

huckstered: peddled, hawked about like petty wares.

Mettre le Roy hors de page: make the King his own master. The French phrase was used of Louis XI of France. We are reminded of the exulting cry of George III's mother when Parliament approved the preliminaries of peace: "Now my son *is* king of England."

runners: messengers, spies and other menials. Compare the use of the word in "Bow-street runners."

Page 22

royal servitude and vile durance. During the reigns of George I and George II the Whigs had been all powerful and the King's will had been in subjection to the will of his ministers. "Ministers," George II once remarked, "are the King in this country." See Histories, and note to "infamously monopolized," p. 21. The word *durance* here means confinement, imprisonment. Compare Shakespeare, *Second Part of Henry IV*, v. v. 37, "in base durance"; and W. Kenrick, *Falstaff's Wedding* (1766), "durance vile."

Page 23

prejudicial: detrimental.

balance. The constitution is in balance, they meant, when the three bodies—King, Lords, Commons—have each their proper rights and no more.

there may not have lately appeared, etc. A bad harvest made the Government in 1766 prohibit the export of corn, not by Act of Parliament but by an Order of Council. When Parliament met, this was defended in the House of Lords by Chatham on the ground of necessity. Northington, however, held the proclamation to be legally as well as morally justifiable, while Camden added that, at worst, it was but forty days' tyranny. The impression left by the ministerial apologists was that here was a revival of the doctrine of the King's dispensing power. See Lecky, *History*, III. 116 *sq.*

democratical. See p. 58, *epidemical.*

Page 24

any particular peers, etc. Burke's hero, the Marquis of Rockingham, and the peers associated with him, as Devonshire, Richmond and others.

aristocracy, in the sense, etc.: *i.e.* "austere and insolent domination"; what Burke elsewhere calls "the worst imaginable government, a feudal aristocracy."

to moot cases: to discuss hypothetical cases.

Page 25

This is all safe and right...the constitution is in danger. These, of course, are not Burke's views, but the views of the cabal.

I rest: I dwell.

managers: the same as the "agents" two lines above.

Harrington's political club. James Harrington (1611—1677) in his imaginary commonwealth, *Oceana* (published 1656), set forth the notion of a rotation or succession of the magistracy secured by the suffrage of the people given by ballot. To promulgate his views he founded a club in 1659—The Rota—which met in Miles's coffee-house in Old Palace Yard and lasted only a few months. Samuel Pepys was a member, and, under date January 10, 1659–60, writes: "Thence to the Coffee-house, where were a great confluence of gentlemen; viz. Mr Harrington, Poultny, chairman, Gold, Petty, &c., where admirable discourse till 9 at night." The title Rota was taken from Rota Romana, the supreme ecclesiastical court of the Roman Church.

Page 26

dependencies: dependents, a sense of the word now obsolete.

perplexed: intricate, complicated, entangled.

rota: rotation. See note to "Harrington's political club," p. 25.

Page 27

gale: not a storm or tempestuous wind, but a favourable breeze. This use of *gale* is still common in poetry. Goldsmith, Burke's contemporary, has it, as:

> "Down where yon anchoring vessel spreads the sail,
> That idly waiting flaps with every gale."
>
> *The Deserted Village*, 399, 400.

rotten members...connexions: worthless members in the best parties.

junto: clique, cabal. The word *junto* is a corruption of the Spanish *junta*, a deliberative or administrative council, from the Latin feminine participle *juncta*. In William III's reign the Junto was the popular name for the group of Whigs—Montagu, Russell, Somers, Wharton—the germ of the later cabinet. See reference to another Junto, p. 96.

retrenchment: a line of defence.

Page 28

traverse: thwart, frustrate. So *traversing*, p. 42.

insignificancy: insignificance. English possesses a considerable

number of similar pairs of words in *-ce*, *-cy*, sometimes with a difference of meaning, sometimes without; as *brilliance*, *brilliancy*; *coherence*, *coherency*; *persistence*, *persistency*; *consistence*, *consistency*; *emergence*, *emergency*; *radiance*, *radiancy*. See *dependencies* (p. 19); *conveniency* (p. 31); *inconveniencies* (p. 42).

management: persons to act for the court. Compare "managers for government," p. 12.

some person. The Duke of Grafton is alluded to. He had been a member of Rockingham's ministry and his resignation sealed the fate of that administration. When he was nominal head of the Chatham ministry that followed, "He had," says Lecky, "abandoned Rockingham, he had abandoned Wilkes, and he was now rapidly abandoning Chatham." In 1770 Grafton resigned, to be succeeded by North.

Page 29

to strip...estate. This refers to a flagrant violation of personal property. Sir James Lowther, Bute's son-in-law, attempted to deprive the Duke of Portland of certain lands held by the Duke but not specified in the grant from William III. Lowther's plea was that no lapse of time could destroy the rights of the Crown, and he had got from the Crown a lease of the lands for himself. See Lecky, *History*, III. 125.

corps: their party, the King's friends.

Page 30

with the higher orders: in the opinion of, in the estimation of.

the riots, etc. See Histories; for example, Lecky, III. 132 *sqq*. St George's Fields surrounded the King's Bench prison, where Wilkes was imprisoned. A detachment of a Scottish regiment was sent to keep the peace. Of the rioters five or six were killed and fifteen wounded.

efficient: for executing business. This explains "to forward or frustrate the execution of any measure," p. 31.

through the household: explains "to occupy all the avenues."

Page 31

a genteel excuse. Most of the posts were sinecures. The word *genteel* means here free from vulgarity, such as not to disgrace a man of rank. Unless used ironically, it is now regarded as a vulgar word.

as it often happens. In such expressions the *it* is now regularly dropped. Compare, "I had less apprehension concerning the dogs, whereof three or four came into the room, as it is usual in farmers' houses." Swift, *Gulliver's Travels*, Part II. chap. I.

the trained part of the senate: the well-disciplined members of the Court party in Parliament. The word *senate* is found as a more or less rhetorical synonym for the British Parliament. In the days when the Commons prohibited the publication of debates and proceedings, the *Gentleman's Magazine* assigned parliamentary news to the "Senate of Great Lilliput." Compare Gray, *Elegy*, 61:

"The applause of listening senates to command."

most respectable: most honourable, of highest rank. So on p. 13.

cast an oblique glance: reflect upon indirectly.

conveniency. This form is now little used. See p. 28, note to *insignificancy*.

PAGE 32

Like Janissaries: the Turkish infantry forming the Sultan's bodyguard, abolished in 1826 after five centuries of existence. They had special privileges, and became unruly and dangerous. In applying this name to the King's friends, Burke suggests that they were the personal instruments of tyranny. In *American Taxation* he calls them "the old mercenary Swiss of state."

king's men, or the king's friends, etc. The term "King's friends" to distinguish a political section, if not invented by Bute, was brought into currency by him. Burke speaks of "invidious exclusion," because the title implied that all others lay under the offensive charge of being the King's enemies, of being disloyal. See p. 56, "that faction which presumptuously choose to call themselves *his friends*."

eight years past: *i.e.* since 1762, the beginning of Bute's ministry; but Burke (p. 13) says it was after Bute's resignation that the "double cabinet" originated.

PAGE 33

influence: keeps up the figure of the stars; for the word in the technical language of astrology means the outpouring of ethereal

fluid from the stars to affect the character and destiny of man. See, for example, Shakespeare, *Tempest*, I. ii. 182 *sqq.*

> "A most auspicious star, whose influence
> If now I court not but omit, my fortunes
> Will ever after droop."

proscription. See p. 18.

a short duration. The Rockingham ministry, even apart from the intrigues of the cabal, could not have lasted long. Owing to death and secession, the Whig administrators of experience were few and old. Party management was in the hands of inexperienced youths. Several ministers were mutually antagonistic. "Chesterfield very justly described the ministry as an arch which wanted its keystone, and the true keystone was evidently Pitt" (Lecky, *History*, III. 95).

Page 34

a mean personal, or a dangerous national quarrel. Bute was attacked on personal grounds, and scandals about the favour of the Dowager Princess of Wales for him were industriously spread and eagerly believed. He was also assailed as a Scotsman, and the old animosity towards the Scots took a new lease of life. Churchill in his poem *The Prophecy of Fame*, and Wilkes in his paper the *North Briton* (its name a sarcasm on Smollett's *Briton* supporting Bute) were the most virulent assailants. Libels poured forth in unlimited profusion, vile songs were sung in every alley. The jack boot, a pun on Bute's Christian name and title, was frequently carried through the streets, along with a bonnet or a petticoat, and hung up on a gallows or burned in a fire. A caricature of Bute and his admirers (reproduced in Traill's *Social England*, vol. v. p. 235, ed. 1904) contains the jack boot with a pole, on which is a wig-block surmounted by a Scotch bonnet and Stuart favour. See Histories; Lecky, for example, III. 49 *sqq.*; and Macaulay, *The Earl of Chatham* (Second Essay).

embody: (used intransitively) form into a body, combine. So on p. 101.

But whoever becomes a party, etc. This is regarded as an allusion to Chatham's administration, 1766, which Burke in his *American Taxation* satirized in the following terms—

"He made an administration, so checkered and speckled; he put together a piece of joinery, so crossly indented and whimsically

dovetailed; a cabinet so variously inlaid; such a piece of diversified mosaic; such a tesselated pavement without cement; here a bit of black stone, and there a bit of white; patriots and courtiers; King's friends and republicans; Whigs and Tories; treacherous friends and open enemies; that it was indeed a very curious show; but utterly unsafe to touch, and unsure to stand on. The colleagues whom he had assorted at the same boards, stared at each other, and were obliged to ask, "Sir, your name?"—"Sir, you have the advantage of me"—"Mr Such-a-one"—"I beg a thousand pardons"—I venture to say, it did so happen that persons had a single office divided between them, who had never spoke to each other in their lives, until they found themselves, they knew not how, pigging together, heads and points, in the same truckle-bed."

Compare note to "this desultory and disconnected part" (p. 98).

Page 35

ferment: agitation. See note to *fermentable*, p. 6.

The discretionary power, etc. The spirit of our constitution demands that the King shall exercise his choice of ministers in accordance with the will of Parliament. See p. 38.

the higher people and the lower: Lords and Commons.

Page 36

magistracy: executive ministry.

at large: free, open, undefined.

a scheme upon paper. Burke, in *Conciliation with America*, says "I have in general no very exalted opinion of the virtue of Paper Government; nor of any Politicks in which the plan is to be wholly separated from the execution."

in the active part: the part concerned with the execution of government functions.

we are no ways. *We* means the people as a whole.

Page 37

desperate: without hope of bettering the state of affairs.

the security of idiots: a foolish unsuspecting over-confidence.

milkiness: softness, gentleness, weakness; common eighteenth century use.

depression: lowering in station, a sense of the word now rare.

consequentially: as a consequence, as a result of that.

Page 38

frame of our commonwealth: the plan or system of our state.

refined: subtle, skilfully contrived.

representatives and grandees: Commons and Lords. The word *grandee* means originally a Spanish nobleman of highest rank.

his negative: his veto.

Page 39

strongholds: places of authority and power.

suffered in bad hands: allowed to be in, tolerated in.

great trusts of the state. See p. 7, note to "the trustees of power."

That man who, etc.: an allusion to Shelburne and others like him.

Page 40

Those knots or cabals, etc.: "the Bedfords, the Grenvilles, and other knots, who are combined for no public purpose, but only as a means of furthering with joint strength their private and individual advantage." (Burke to Rockingham.)

Page 41

cunning: clever, skilful.

to disgust: excite aversion or indignation in. Compare p. 17.

opinion of the mere vulgar. See p. 2.

humour: caprice. So *humours* below. Compare p. 18.

Page 42

traversing: thwarting. So p. 28.

inconveniencies: inconveniences. So p. 69. See *insignificancy*, p. 28. *Inconveniency* is now a rare form.

good-humour: condition of amiable cheerfulness.

nicely: scrupulously, with scrupulous care and accuracy.

wise: used ironically.

Page 43

No lines, etc. Burke again and again points out the absurdity of treating political questions as if they were metaphysical or mathematical problems. Compare *Speech on Conciliation*, "Man acts from adequate motives relative to his interests; and not on

metaphysical speculations. Aristotle, the great master of reasoning, cautions us, and with great weight and propriety, against this species of delusive geometrical accuracy in moral arguments, as the most fallacious of all sophistry"; *American Taxation*, "I am not here going into the distinction of rights, not attempting to mark their boundaries. I do not enter into these metaphysical distinctions; I hate the very sound of them"; *Appeal from the New to the Old Whigs*, "Nothing universal can be rationally affirmed on any moral or any political subject. Pure metaphysical abstraction does not belong to these matters. The lines of morality are not like ideal lines of mathematicks. They are broad and deep as well as long."

tolerably: fairly. Burke intentionally understates his case by using the weak word *tolerably*. He really means quite easily distinguishable. So p. 86.

curious: minutely careful; characterized by special care.

yeomanry: yeomen, the class of smaller landowners.

Page 44

But a system, etc.: France. Compare what Boswell (*Life of Johnson*, 1772) reports Johnson as saying: "There is a remedy in human nature against tyranny, that will keep us safe under every form of government. Had not the people of France thought themselves honoured in sharing in the brilliant actions of Louis XIV, they would not have endured him; and we may say the same of the King of Prussia's people."

Page 45

pious: dutiful, filial, patriotic; now rare in this sense. Compare the Latin *pius*.

For the idea of the passage see *American Taxation*, "Interested timidity disgraces as much in the Cabinet, as personal timidity in the field. But timidity, with regard to the well-being of our country, is heroic virtue."

tender sensation: delicate sensitiveness.

conquest of Corsica. For several centuries Corsica was under the rule of the Genoese Republic. Led by Paoli the Corsicans rose against their masters, and had sympathy and help from Britain. In 1762, however, British subjects were forbidden to assist the Corsicans. Paoli was still unbeaten when in 1768 the Genoese sold Corsica to the French. Had Britain acted differently, the island would have

become independent; and Napoleon Bonaparte, born in 1769, would not have been a Frenchman. The French are meant by "the professed enemies"; the British by "its professed defenders." Boswell, it will be remembered, was an enthusiastic supporter of Paoli.

lenity: mercifulness.

ransom of Manilla. Manilla was taken in 1762, and the ransom for the Philippines was fixed at a million sterling—half in money, half in bills on the Spanish Treasury. This half the Spanish Government agreed to pay under the Treaty of Paris, 1763. The ransom was never paid.

East India prisoners. The garrison of Pondicherry, the last French stronghold in India, captured in 1761.

PAGE 46

acquittal by prescription: *i.e.* the claims would lapse if not pressed within a certain time. The Grenville ministry was slack in demanding the Manilla ransom; and this slackness was relied upon by the Spanish Government as an argument for refusal when the Rockingham ministry pressed for payment.

spirited: ironical use. Burke means that the remonstrances were weak and ineffective.

vine-dresser: statesman. The figure seems suggested by the word *branches* along with a Biblical reminiscence, John xv. 1—3.

æra: era = date of origin. We keep the spelling *æ* in some words, as *Cæsar*, *ægis*; in others we replace it by *e*, as *Etna*, *ether*. The origin of *æra* is late Latin *æra*, number expressed in figures, being the plural of the neuter word, *æs*, *æris*, money, treated as a feminine singular.

the ministers...curtain: the exterior administration, as opposed to the real, the interior administration behind the scenes. Compare Lord Chesterfield's remark about the ministry that succeeded Bute's: "The public looked still at Lord Bute through the curtain, which indeed was a very transparent one."

shadows of ministers: the exterior administrations. For the figure, compare Marlowe, *Edward II*, 2012 *sq.*

> "But what are kings, when regiment is gone,
> But perfect shadows in a sunshine day?"

causa sine qua non: indispensable condition. In this phrase *causa* is now regularly omitted.

Corsica. See p. 45.

the French minister: the Duke of Choiseul, the famous minister of Louis XV.

Page 47

of the (I had like to have said British) administration: I was likely to have said, I narrowly missed saying. *Had like to* is now archaic in the written language, though still colloquial. Burke here employs the orator's device of pretending he has been almost betrayed into calling it a British administration, whereas such an action would disgrace the name of British. See pp. 57, 80, and 100.

He returns: historic present for vividness. So in the three following sentences.

acquiesce...under. Modern usage has *in* not *under*.

attention to the delicacy: consideration for his feelings.

Our office: the Foreign Office.

authenticity: the state of being authoritative or duly authorized, possessing trustworthiness.

delicate: requiring care and tact in handling.

Page 48

in both the parts. The colonial policy of the Government was, we must remember, the policy of the King and of the majority of the nation.

a volume. Burke had studied the American question very deeply, and had spoken and written upon it. His great speeches were yet to come—*American Taxation* (1774) and *Conciliation with America* (1775). He had already a clear vision of the dangers of the American difficulty.

The court party, etc. See pp. 13 *sqq.*

Page 49

something else: Royal influence and Court favour.

the roast beef of Old England: an allusion to the song "The Roast Beef of Old England," which Fielding had inserted in his *Grub-Street Opera*, 1731.

sinister piety: filial affection of a perverted type. Compare note to *pious*, p. 45.

Page 50

alternative: offer or condition of choosing. That is, they have

permission to choose, but the choice is distressing. So on p. 101, "miserable alternative."

election: deliberate choice or preference.

the voice of law: an allusion to "Silent enim leges inter arma" (Cicero, *pro Milone*, IV. 10), which Burke reproduces as "Laws are commanded to hold their tongues amongst arms" (*Revolution in France*).

pensioners of state. In one of the Middlesex elections the mob-supporters of the Government candidate had killed a supporter of the popular candidate. Two men were convicted; but the Government pardoned both and pensioned one.

array of riot, etc. Note the oxymoron, the studied contradiction of *array* and *riot*; *discipline* and *confusion*.

Government is put, etc. Soldiers had illegally killed members of mobs in the Wilkes riots, and had escaped punishment: members of other mobs who deserved punishment had been pardoned by the Government.

Anarchy predominates, etc. See p. 102, note to "perfect freedom."

Page 51

enslaved to a faction, etc. See note to "royal servitude," p. 22.

touched: treated lightly, in passing. One of these touches occurs on p. 45, "Accordingly the crown," etc.

inventory: detailed list.

royal indigence. It should be remembered that both King and Queen were frugal, not to say parsimonious, in their tastes and habits. "In 1762," says May (*Constitutional History*, I. 197 *sq.*) "he purchased Buckingham House....Here he lived in privacy, attended only by menial servants, and keeping up none of the splendour of a Court." In a footnote, May quotes from a letter (1804) in which Mr Addington says he has just partaken of the King's dinner, "which consisted of mutton chops and pudding." See Thackeray, *The Four Georges*.

Page 52

by means which have, etc. See pp. 75 *sqq.*

mechanical: base, vulgar. So also in Shakespeare; but now obsolete in this sense.

mete out: measure out, allot.

apparatus: furnishings, equipments, provision.

Nothing expended, nothing saved: has the conciseness of a proverb.

cognizance: right of dealing with legally and officially.

Page 53

Osnaburg. In the 1770 and other early editions of *The Discontents*, the form is *Osnabrug*, while an older form of the word is *Osnabrugge*. Osnabrück is now a city in Prussian Hanover. Its old bishopric was, by the Treaty of Westphalia in 1648, to be administered alternately by Roman Catholic and Protestant bishops, the latter invariably to be chosen from the Lüneburg House. George III, representing the Braunschweig-Lüneburg family, had lately appointed the infant Prince Frederick—afterwards Duke of York—to the bishopric, in his case, of course, merely titular.

drawn away, etc. "Lord Chatham avowed his conviction that the Civil List revenues were expended in corrupting members of Parliament." May, *Constitutional History*, I. 199.

disgusts. See p. 17.

Page 54

expose him, etc. This appears to refer to the domineering behaviour of Grenville and Bedford to the King. See Lecky, *History*, III. 88 *sqq.*; May, *Constitutional History*, I. 26.

projectors: planners, designers, schemers; a word often associated with the promoters of bubble companies or the devisers of chimerical schemes. See its use by Swift, *Gulliver's Travels*, Part III, chaps. V, VI.

greatness: the King.

Page 55

monstrous: *i.e.* in the eyes of the cabal.

refined project: subtle plan. On p. 56 it is called "this fine-wrought scheme." Burke frequently denounces subtle, over-elaborated plans; as "This fine-spun scheme had the usual fate of all exquisite policy" (*American Taxation*); "Refined policy ever has been the parent of confusion" (*Conciliation with America*).

Page 56

The father of his people. The ruler in Bolingbroke's *Patriot*

King, George III's inspiration, was a good father ruling for the good of his people, though according to his own will.

his friends. See p. 32.

If particular men, *i.e.* those men called royal favourites, and here, in particular, the Earl of Bute.

the pleasant part: the amusing thing, the joke. *Pleasant* is obsolete in this sense.

a true and severe: strict, austere but trustworthy.

Quantum infido, etc. How a friend will differ from a faithless parasite!—an adapted quotation from Horace:

> 'Ut matrona meretrici dispar erit atque
> Discolor, infido scurræ distabit amicus."
>
> *Epist.* I. xviii. 3 *sq.*

Page 57

I hope I shall be indulged: just the kind of apologetic remark that Burke the orator would make in a speech, as "But as the reasons for that difference are my apology for thus troubling you, suffer me to state them in a very few words. I shall compress them into as small a body as I possibly can" (*Conciliation with America*). See p. 47.

no part of the standing government...as a controul. In 1213 four men were summoned from each shire to assess the damages to the clergy which King John had to make good. In 1254 the regents gathered a Great Council, to which for the first time representative knights from the shire were called. The regents adopted this as a ready means of ascertaining what aid the shires would give, but it was in the future to prove useful as a check on baronial anarchy if and when the king's power was weak. In 1265 Earl Simon, to control the councillors, called a parliament in which besides bishops, abbots and barons, there sat four knights from each shire and two representatives each from certain towns. With modifications, Earl Simon's plan was followed by Edward I in 1295, in the "Model" Parliament. Though control was not the aim of the original summoning of popular representatives, yet that was what it developed into.

what juries are. Compare Gardiner's remark about the 1213 summons: "The meeting thus summoned was the germ of the future House of Commons. It was not a national political assembly, but

it was a national jury gathered together into one place" (*Student's History*, p. 180).

remoter and more permanent: the King and the Lords.

Page 58

epidemical: is seldom used now. It has the same meaning as *epidemic*. So below *characteristical*, where we prefer *characteristic*. Such double forms often occur with a difference of meaning, as *politic, political*; *comic, comical*.

phrensy: frenzy, mad excitement, delirious fury. The spelling with *ph* is now rare.

The king is the representative, etc. See p. 7; and "Kings, in one sense, are undoubtedly the servants of the people, because their power has no other rational end than that of the general advantage" (*Revolution in France*); "All persons possessing any portion of power ought to be strongly and awefully impressed with an idea that they act in trust; and that they are to account for their conduct in that trust to the one great master, author and founder of society" (*ibid.*).

a popular representative: a House of Commons.

express image: exactly resembling. The phrase is from Hebrews, i. 3.

Page 59

appointed: equipped, furnished. So in the Bible (A.V.) and Shakespeare.

addressing...petitioning. This appears to be an allusion to events in regard to the Middlesex election. A petition to the King from the City of London was left unanswered, and next year, 1770, the Lord Mayor, aldermen, and livery agreed to send another petition, which was couched in very strong terms. They declared that the majority in the House of Commons had deprived them of their dearest rights, and had done a deed more ruinous than the levying of ship-money or the claim of the dispensing power. They prayed the King to dissolve Parliament and remove for ever his evil ministers from his councils. The Commons with the concurrence of the Lords addressed the King, declaring the conduct of the City to be highly unwarrantable and tending to disturb the peace of the kingdom. The King had already called the City's petition disrespectful to himself and unconstitutional. This answer from the

King, Chatham and Rockingham agreed in holding as itself unconstitutional and dangerous, since "the exercise of the clearest rights of the subject to petition the King for redress of grievances, had been checked by reprimand." See May, *Constitutional History*, I. 401 *sqq*.

eager to grant. See pp. 78—82.

refuse to inquire. In connexion with the riot of May 10th, 1768 (p. 50), Burke had made a motion in the House for a Committee of Inquiry. "If ever," he said, "the time should come when this House shall be found prompt to execute and slow to inquire; ready to punish the excesses of the people, and slow to listen to their grievances; ready to grant supplies, and slow to examine the account; ready to invest magistrates with large powers, and slow to inquire into the exercise of them, ready to entertain notions of the military power as incorporated with the constitution —when you learn this in the air of St James's, then the business is done; then the House of Commons will change that character which it receives from the people only."

awful: awe-inspiring. Burke frequently has *awful*, and *awfully*, in this sense; as below, p. 90; and "Surely it is an awful subject; or there is none so on this side of the grave" (*Conciliation with America*).

procuration: authorized action on behalf on others.

delegation: entrusting of authority to deputies.

original: self-originated, not a delegate and proxy, not one of the "trustees for the people."

material: important, essential.

Page 60

Parliament must therefore sit every year. In William III's reign the Mutiny Act originated, by which alone the King had lawful means of maintaining discipline. This Act had to be renewed every year and, therefore, Parliament must meet every year. Again, Parliament did not give William full revenue for life, but limited part of it to four years. Subsequently, the grant was made annually. No sovereign could then become financially independent of Parliament, but must summon it every year.

septennial...triennial. Charles II had retained the Cavalier Parliament for seventeen and a half years. To prevent future attempts to keep an obedient Parliament after it was out of touch

with the nation, the Triennial Act of 1694 laid down that no Parliament should last more than three years. In 1716—the year after the Jacobite Rebellion—the Whigs feared that the next general election, which under the Triennial Act would take place early in 1718, would result in a Tory majority, which might bring back the Pretender. Accordingly, they passed a Septennial Act, under which the existing Parliament lengthened its duration by four years and did not expire till March 1722.

constant habit: *i.e.* by sitting "every year and for great part of the year."

a disorder: *i.e.* becoming "a standing senate," what below is called "this great inconvenience."

Page 61

religiously: scrupulously.

Thus the controul, etc. Compare "they come rather too near detail, and to the province of executive government; which I wish Parliament always to superintend, never to assume" (*Conciliation with America*).

Impeachment, etc. In reality, what was making impeachment rare was the growing responsibility of ministers to Parliament. Their position depended on its pleasure, but this responsibility protected the fallen minister. "When the acts and policy of statesmen had been dictated by their duty to the Crown alone, without regard to the approval of Parliament, they were in danger of being crushed by vindictive impeachments and attainders." Examples of this are Strafford, Clarendon, Danby, Oxford, Bolingbroke, and Ormond. "But Parliamentary responsibility has prevented the commission of those political crimes, which had provoked the indignation of the Commons; and when the conduct or policy of ministers has been condemned, loss of power has been their only punishment." May, *Constitutional History*, I. 463. In theory and in practice, Burke strongly believed in the value of the right of impeachment.

Page 62

the acting powers: the executive.

the event: the result. So p. 8.

hardy: bold, audacious.

to alter the right of election: *i.e.* in the case of Wilkes, 1768–1769. See Histories; *e.g.* May, I. 391 *sqq.*; Lecky, III. 129 *sqq.*

descriptions: kinds, classes.

The arguments. Lecky gives a summary of these in his *History*, III. 144 *sqq*.

Page 63

though one rose: Luke, xvi. 31.

countenance: favour, good-will.

popular honours and popular trusts: the two aspects of a seat in the House of Commons—a mark of honour and a position of trust.

merely popular: purely, entirely popular. Compare, "Their governments are popular in a high degree; some are merely popular" (*Conciliation with America*).

Page 64

licentiousness: lawlessness.

exorbitances: excesses.

favourable construction: favourable interpretation. So *constructions* below. Compare pp. 71, 72

loss of the popular object. The Commons, at their own discretion, rejected the candidate who had been elected, and gave the seat to the candidate who had not been elected. The electors thus lost the power of exercising their wishes through their representative.

Popularity, etc. Compare p. 63, "That the favour...trusts." That this was the aim of the cabal is disputed by May, who says (*Constitutional History*, I. 395), "This view, however, is too deep and philosophical, to have been the true one. The court party, having been defied and insulted by a political opponent, were determined to crush him; and scarcely stopped to consider whether the laws were outraged or not."

Their odium, etc. Having been declared incapable of sitting in the House, Wilkes was re-elected, and again rejected by the Commons. This game of battledore and shuttlecock might go on indefinitely. So it was arranged that Colonel Luttrell should resign his seat and oppose Wilkes. The electors showed "their odium" by giving Luttrell only 296 votes while Wilkes had 1143. The Commons again voted the election of Wilkes null and void; and, having called for the poll-books, proceeded by a strained interpretation of their powers, to declare that Luttrell in spite of his small

vote was the legal representative of Middlesex. See May, *Constitutional History*, I. 396 *sq.*

the trustee. See p. 7.

This was punishing, etc.: as if following the scriptural injunction, "If thy right eye offend thee, pluck it out, and cast it from thee," Matthew v. 29.

Page 65

in the disposal. Modern usage requires the preposition *at*.

animadvert upon: take cognizance of and punish or censure. Archaic in this sense.

that severe letter: the strictly literal interpretation of the law; such as Shylock, in the *Merchant of Venice*, demanded, and received.

temperaments: modifications, mitigations, restraints. So in *Revolutions in France*, "They produce *temperaments*, preventing the sore evil of harsh, crude, unqualified reformations." Compare, "Wholesome temperaments of the rashness of popular assemblies." —Sir James Mackintosh. This sense of the word is archaic or obsolete.

Page 66

criminal equity. In certain cases where a law requires correction or supplement, recourse is had to principles of justice; and a system of equity has grown up coexisting with and superseding common and statute law. But, however advantageous equity may be in the Court of Chancery, "criminal equity" would be "a monster in jurisprudence": it would never do to allow the judge "a large and liberal construction" in fixing or defining offences and in punishing them as he pleases.

the star chamber. This well-known Court (1487—1641) was noted for its summary and arbitrary procedure.

Lord Bacon. The allusion is to a passage in Bacon's *History of Henry VII.* The expression "Lord Bacon" is usual but inaccurate. Bacon was knighted in 1603; and, after becoming Lord Chancellor, was created Baron Verulam in 1618, and Viscount St Albans in 1621.

a committee of council: as the Star Chamber was. When erected this Court consisted of certain members of the Privy Council

with two judges, and revived to some extent the disused criminal authority of the King's Council.

I will not believe, etc. The best commentary on this paragraph and the next is a passage in Macaulay, *The Earl of Chatham* (Second Essay), beginning "In one matter, indeed, Grenville." Compare May, *Constitutional History*, I. 389 *sq.* "On the first day of the session...Lord Sandwich complained to the Lords of an 'Essay on Woman,' with notes, to which the name of Bishop Warburton was affixed; and of another printed paper called 'The *Veni Creator* paraphrased.' Of the 'Essay on Woman,' thirteen copies only had been printed, in Wilkes' private printing-press: there was no evidence of publication; and a proof-copy of the work had been obtained through the treachery of one of the printers." The ground for complaint was the use of the bishop's name—a breach of privilege; but "it was notorious that the politics of the author were the true ground of offence, and not his blasphemy, or his irreverence to the bishop. The proceeding was the more ridiculous from the complaint of obscenity having been made by the most profligate of peers."

full as: quite, fully as.

sacred and civil. Note this use of *civil* meaning not ecclesiastical (as in the phrase "civil magistrates") and so not sacred but secular.

Page 67

the identical persons who, etc.: Lord March, afterwards Duke of Queensberry, "who," remarks Thackeray, "certainly as Earl or Duke, young man or greybeard, was not an ornament to any possible society"; the Earl of Sandwich, who had become Secretary of State; and Dashwood, who had been created Baron le Despenser. All three were notorious profligates and boon companions of Wilkes.

fœdum crimen servitutis: the shameful imputation of servility, from Tacitus, *Histories*, I. 1.

Page 68

adventures: ventures. So in Bible (A.V.) Deut. xxviii. 56, Acts xix. 31; Shakespeare; and Bunyan.

Breves et infaustos, etc. Short-lived and ill-starred are the attachments of the Roman people, from Tacitus, *Annals*, II. 41.

This is part of the historian's gloomy reflections on the triumph of Germanicus in A.D. 17.

the principle: that the representative is the candidate the electors favour most (as Wilkes) and not anyone they detest.

avarice or vanity: the greedy will get money; the vain, honours.

expiring interest: his decaying influence, contrasted with "a spreading interest" mentioned above, and the same as "a hopeless interest," p. 69.

mayors, etc.: the voters in the boroughs. *Burgess* in its widest sense means an inhabitant of a borough; in a stricter sense, one with full municipal rights. The Capital Burgesses were magistrates, or members of the governing body of the borough.

indemnity from quarters: exemption from having soldiers quartered or billeted on the inhabitants.

Page 69

pitiful: miserable, paltry, contemptible.

the doors are locked: to exclude strangers and so prevent his speech reaching the public. Of the Parliament in 1770, it is noted by May (*Constitutional History*, I. 410), "The exclusion of strangers was generally more strict than had been customary; and whenever a popular member of Opposition endeavoured to make himself heard by the people, the ready expedient was adopted of closing the doors."

elocution: artistic style in speaking, oratory.

knowing: well-informed, intelligent. The usual modern sense of *knowing* is cunning, wide-awake, and (colloquially) stylish, smart.

eclat: conspicuous success, universal applause.

eloquence: fluent, forcible, apt speaking.

out of the line: going beyond the limit.

animated: vigorous. Compare *spirited*, p. 67.

unless they are controuled, etc. The freedom from control of constituents which the Commons enjoyed at this time was not the result of the Court intrigues but had grown up, under the Whigs as well as under others, to monstrous proportions in Burke's day. "The House of Commons," says May (*Constitutional History*, I. 272 *sqq.*) "was at once independent and corrupt. The Crown and the dominant political families who wielded its power, readily commanded a majority of that assembly. A large proportion of the

borough members were the nominees of peers and great landowners; or were mainly returned through the political interest of those magnates. Many were the nominees of the Crown; or owed their seats to government influence. Rich adventurers—having purchased their seats of the proprietors, or acquired them by bribery —supported the ministry of the day, for the sake of honours, patronage, or court favour. The county members were generally identified with the territorial aristocracy. The adherence of a further class was secured by places and pensions: by shares in loans, lotteries, and contracts; and even by pecuniary bribes."... "The Duke of Norfolk was represented by eleven members; Lord Lonsdale by nine; Lord Darlington by seven; the Duke of Rutland, the Marquess of Buckingham, and Lord Carrington, each by six."

Page 70

any limited member of government: one house acting alone. To be legal, an act must be shared in by the three "members of government"—King, Lords, Commons.

of which. Note the relative pronoun *which* linking two independent sentences. The demonstrative pronoun is the regular usage. Compare, "Whereupon, being not a little discomforted, we were advising with ourselves what we should do. During which time there made forth to us a small boat." Bacon, *New Atlantis*. So Galat. iv. 24. The construction, which seems to be a Latinism, was widespread in the Elizabethan period.

first franchise: most important right as citizens, *viz.* to be represented by the candidate they themselves elect.

Page 71

preposterously: in reverse order, having that first which should be last; now rare in this sense.

Titius...Richard Roe. In Roman law, Titius and Maevius (also Aulus Agerius and Numerius Negidius), in English law John Doe and Richard Roe (also John-a-Nokes, John-a-Stiles) appear as the fictitious parties in certain suits. See Smith's *Dictionary of Greek and Roman Antiquities*, *s.v.* "Actio"; *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, *s.v.* "Ejectment and Fine."

Page 72

constructively: by inference, by interpretation. The House

turned Luttrell's minority into a decisive vote for him by interpreting the decision to disqualify Wilkes as invalidating every vote given for Wilkes.

ens rationis: that which is conceived as being while yet it has no real existence.

common recoveries. Before 1285 when an estate was granted to a man and his heirs, it became his absolute property as soon as a child was born and he could alienate his lands if he chose. But in that year the Second Statute of Westminster, or "De Donis Conditionalibus," enacted that the holder had only a life interest in the estate, which, if his children were not alive at his death, reverted to the original grantor. Power of entail was thus created. But this restraint on alienation was contrary to "sense and utility," and the courts allowed tenants in tail to bar or cut off the entail. From the time of Edward IV the statute was evaded by fictitious actions, called Fines and Recoveries. For this cumbrous method, a simple disentailing deed was substituted, 3 and 4 William IV, c. 74.

PAGE 73

burthen: the older and the original spelling—the O.E. form being *byrþen*. The usual form is now *burden*, except in the sense of "tonnage."

two other co-ordinate powers: the King and the Lords; called below "the other orders of the state."

if it were not just. Instead of the subjunctive *were*, modern usage in such conditions has indicative. Compare

> "If it were so, it was a grievous fault."
> Shakespeare, *Julius Caesar*, III. ii. 84.

we...us: the people. Burke speaks as one of the people, not as a member of the House of Commons.

PAGE 74

court of king's bench: played a conspicuous part in the Wilkes case. That court had outlawed him, when he was not present for sentence on the charge of reprinting No. 45. There he afterwards appeared, and the legality of the outlawry was debated amid much excitement. There also he was sentenced to imprisonment for twenty-two months and a fine of £1000.

appropriations: *i.e.* voting supplies and designating them for

specific services by statute—a valuable means of restraining the undue influence of the Crown.

PAGE 75

civil list: comprising the support of the royal household, and the king's personal expenses, as well as the payment of civil offices and pensions.

former manner. To admit the right of the Commons to an explanation of the debts, as previous sovereigns did, would have been an acknowledgment of the power of the Commons.

PAGE 76

last rebellion: the Jacobite rising in 1745.

PAGE 77

a greater charge. George II's funeral, and the King's marriage and coronation, were stated as causing increased expenditure.

the very being of the establishment: the ruling dynasty.

from abroad: chiefly from France. The most important occasion was the attempted invasion of England by a French fleet in 1744. See Hume Brown, *History of Scotland*, III. 214 *sqq.*, ed. 1911.

PAGE 79

by previous questions. In debate it may sometimes be felt awkward or inadvisable to put the main question. To avoid putting the main question, the previous question is moved; that is, the question is put whether or not a vote shall be taken on the main question. For example, when Burke moved his American resolutions (see *Conciliation with America, ad fin.*) several of them were met by the previous question and were thus shelved without being decided on their merits.

prevention: *either* precaution, *or* in the literal sense of coming before, *i.e.* of examining the accounts before voting payment. Both these senses are obsolete.

the god in the machine: an adaptation of the familiar "Deus ex machina," something that appears in the nick of time to solve a difficulty. The corresponding Greek phrase is ὥσπερ ἀπὸ μηχανῆς, and the allusion is to the theatrical machine employed to make gods appear in the air when their interposition was necessary.

committee of supply: the Parliamentary title for the House of Commons when discussing details of finance.

Page 80

the budget. Burke introduces this familiar term with the words "what is called" as though still not well known in 1770. The earliest use of *budget* for the Chancellor of the Exchequer's annual statement, given in the *Oxford English Dictionary*, is dated 1733. In the Historical Section (by Burke) of the *Annual Register* for 1785 occurs the sentence—"On the 30th of June Mr Pitt opened the national accounts for the year, or what is generally termed the Budget."

navy or exchequer bills. A navy bill is a bill issued by the Admiralty in place of ready-money payment. An exchequer bill is a bill of credit issued by authority of Parliament bearing interest at current rates.

the sinking fund: the surplus of the year's revenue over expenditure devoted to payment of national debt. Robert Walpole proposed the earliest sinking fund in 1717. Tories like Squire Western in *Tom Jones* feared that their acres would be shipped to Hanover to be put into the sinking fund (Bk VI, chap. X).

Mr Pelham: Prime Minister, 1744–1754.

look upon to be. The modern usage is *as*, not *to be*.

civil government—within what limits, think you? This break in the construction and sudden change from statement to rhetorical question, is an orator's device. Compare p. 47.

Page 81

gave...a full loose: allowed completely unbridled freedom.

dissipation: wasteful expenditure.

idle: ineffective, not in active use. Compare Milton, *Nativity Ode*, 55,

> "The idle spear and shield were high uphung."

unoperative: now obsolete. We use *inoperative*.

Page 82

prolifick principle: a precedent for many similar proceedings.

the fruitful mother, etc.: an allusion to a passage in Hezekiah Thrift's letter (*The Spectator*, 509). The writer mentions the saying "Hobson's Choice" and traces it to Hobson, the Cambridge carrier,

whose memory is kept alive by Hobson's conduit in Cambridge and by Milton's two poems on his death. "This memorable man," says Hezekiah, "stands drawn in fresco at an inn (which he used) in Bishopgate-street, with an hundred pound bag under his arm, with this inscription upon the said bag:

'The fruitful mother of an hundred more.'"

wisdom of our ancestors. Burke believed in using the experience of the past as a guide to the present, and frequently appealed to "the wisdom of our ancestors." See *Conciliation with America*, "I set out...with a profound reverence for the wisdom of our ancestors, who have left us the inheritance of so happy a constitution, and so flourishing an empire, and what is a thousand times more valuable, the treasury of the maxims and principles which formed the one and obtained the other....But, Sir, I am sure that I shall not be misled when, in a case of constitutional difficulty, I consult the genius of the English constitution"; and *Revolution in France*, "People will not look forward to posterity, who never look backward to their ancestors....By adhering in this manner and on those principles to our forefathers, we are guided not by the superstition of antiquarians but by the spirit of philosophic analogy."

Page 83

to shorten the duration of parliaments. Attempts had been made in George II's reign to get the Septennial Act repealed; and early in George III's reign Alderman Sawbridge began to submit his annual motion for shortening the duration of parliaments. In 1769 the Society of the Supporters of the Bill of Rights was founded and its tests for candidates included annual parliaments; the exclusion of members who accepted place, pension, contract, or other emolument from the Crown; the impeachment of the ministers who deprived the Middlesex electors of their rights; and other demands. Moderate reformers advocated triennial parliaments; and Chatham, at first against any change, came round to the view that triennial parliaments were essential to defend the constitution. See Lecky, *History*, III. 175 *sqq.*; May, *Constitutional History*, I. 367 *sq.*

to disqualify...placemen. In William III's reign, to secure support for the government, a minister would give a member of the Commons a place revocable at the pleasure of the Crown. Afraid that the Whig Junto would thus keep itself permanently in power,

the Tories were eager to make it illegal for members to hold not merely minor places of profit but even the great posts of Chancellor of the Exchequer and Secretary of State. Such a severance of the ministry from the Commons would have been disastrous. It was, however, laid down that those holding offices created after 25th October, 1705, should be incapable of sitting in Parliament; and a member of the Commons accepting an old office had to vacate his seat, though he might be re-elected. This and later acts checked the excessive multiplication of offices; but placemen, pledged by the places they held to support the ministry, were in 1770 still very numerous. In the first parliament of George I two hundred and seventy-one members held offices, pensions and sinecures; in the first of George II two hundred and fifty-seven. By 1820 these had been reduced to eighty-nine, and by 1833 to sixty, exclusive of officers in the army and navy. See May, *Constitutional History*, I. 307 *sqq.*

horrible disorders. The buying of seats and the bribing of electors cost the candidates huge sums of money. All kinds of manœuvres were employed to defeat an opponent—riots and open violence, defrauding of votes through the connivance of the returning officer. During the forty days when the poll might go on, the public-houses were thrown open. Drunkenness prevailed everywhere. "Bands of hired ruffians—armed with bludgeons and inflamed by drink—paraded the public thoroughfares, intimidating voters, and resisting their access to the polling places" (May, *Constitutional History*, I. 291). See Hogarth's four election scenes—"The Canvass," "The Poll," "The Chairing," "The Dinner"—reproduced, for example, in Gardiner's *Student's History*, pp. 733—736. Compare Goldsmith, *Citizen of the World*, CXII. Cowper, in a letter to Rev. John Newton (April 26, 1784), says: "...The candidates for this county have set an example of economy, which other candidates would do well to follow, having come to an agreement on both sides to defray the expenses of their voters, but to open no houses for the entertainment of the rabble; a reform, however, which the rabble did not at all approve of, and testified their dislike of it by a riot. A stage was built, from which the orators had designed to harangue the electors. This became the first victim of their fury. Having very little curiosity to hear what gentlemen could say who would give them nothing better than words, they broke it in pieces, and threw the fragments upon the hustings. The sheriff, the

members, the lawyers, the voters, were instantly put to flight. They rallied, but were again routed by a second assault, like the former. They then proceeded to break the windows of the inn to which they had fled; and a fear prevailing that at night they would fire the town, a proposal was made by the freeholders to face about and endeavour to secure them. At that instant a rioter, dressed in a merry-andrew's jacket, stepped forward, and challenged the best man among them. Olney sent the hero to the field, who made him repent of his presumption. Mr Ashburner was he. Seizing him by the throat, he shook him,—he threw him to the earth, he made the hollowness of his skull resound by the application of his fists, and dragged him into custody without the least damage to his person. Animated by this example, the other freeholders followed it: and in five minutes twenty-eight out of thirty ragamuffins were safely lodged in gaol...."

Page 84

canvassing the fate: discussing thoroughly.

depending: pending, awaiting settlement.

harrass: common spelling in the seventeenth and the eighteenth century.

interest: influence.

habit of affairs: practice or experience in public matters. These men are the opposite of those "who are less practised in business," p. 85. This is an obsolete use of *habit*.

Page 85

revenue officers. These officers had, as part of their duty, to vote for the ministerial candidates; and several proposals were made about this time to disqualify them. This was done in 1782. It was absolutely necessary, for seventy elections chiefly depended on the votes of revenue officers; and 11,500 officers of customs and excise —a huge proportion of the then limited electorate—were electors. In a single borough, one-fourth of the voters held revenue appointments. See May, *Constitutional History*, I. 288 *sqq*.

a great official...interest. *Interest* here means a number of men having common interests.

Page 86

open them: open up, expound, treat fully.

tolerably: deliberately understates the situation. Burke, as the context shows, means *tolerably* to suggest very well. So p. 43.

the influence of contracts, etc. Contracts for the supply of stores for the public services, shares in loans and lotteries on more favourable terms than the general public got, and all kinds of direct and indirect bribery were employed to enrich, and so influence, supporters of government. See May, *Constitutional History*, I. 314 *sqq*.

Page 87

on a nice equipoise: delicately balanced, where the equilibrium might be easily disturbed. Compare "the balance of the constitution," pp. 21 and 23.

interposition...legal remedy. King, Lords and Commons being trustees for the people, the people can legally interfere if any of these bodies is false to its trust.

Page 88

of counties and corporations: of the county electors and the borough electors.

list of the voters. No official list of the members voting was kept: numbers only were considered essential. On very important questions the minority would publish their own names, but rarely could a list of the majority be obtained. The conduct of most of the silent members was consequently a secret; they were irresponsible and escaped the control of their constituents. It was only in 1836 that the Commons began to record the votes of each member and publish them as part of the daily proceedings. See May, *Constitutional History*, I. 432 *sq*.

compacting: joining firmly together, here opposed to *dissolving*.

frightened. The earliest editions have *frighted*. *Fright* is the older form, and the only form used by Shakespeare.

Page 89

Parliamentary support comes and goes, etc.: what Burke (p. 88) calls "indiscriminate support of all administrations," "this blind and undistinguishing support."

scandalous or reputable: of bad or good repute, dishonourable

or honourable. *Scandalous* in this sense of grossly disgraceful, infamous, is now rarely used of persons.

men of rank and ability, etc.: as Rockingham and his party. See p. 33.

Page 91

infidelity: unfaithfulness, treachery, disloyalty.

versatility: changeableness, inconstancy.

holdings: means of exerting influence, sources of strength; *i.e.* this detaching of members from their party. See p. 15.

connexions: parties, *i.e.* bodies of persons connected by political ties.

dissipated: broken up and scattered.

draughts: detachments, contingents. In this sense the more usual spelling is *drafts*.

Page 92

the then administration: Rockingham's. See p. 33.

habitudes: intimacies, familiar relationships. See pp. 16 and 94.

enthusiasm: fanaticism. In the eighteenth century the word often meant ill-regulated or misdirected religious emotion.

It is not enough, etc. This is regarded as an allusion to the Earl of Chatham. Compare Lecky, *History*, III. 102.

Page 93

apology: justification, vindication, defence.

disculpation: freeing from blame, exculpation. The word is now rarely used.

I admit, etc. Professor Maccunn calls this whole passage "the best plea for party in our own or any language." Compare Arthur Helps, *Essays written in the Intervals of Business*, "Party Spirit"; Lecky, *History*, I. 103 *sqq.*; and Macaulay, *The Earl of Chatham* (Second Essay)—"We are inclined to think that the use and the abuse of party cannot be better illustrated than by a parallel between two powerful connections of that time, the Rockinghams and the Bedfords. The Rockingham party was, in our view, exactly what a party should be. It consisted of men bound together by common opinions, by common public objects, by mutual esteem. That they desired to obtain, by honest and constitutional means, the direction

of affairs they openly avowed. But, though often invited to accept the honours and emoluments of office, they steadily refused to do so on any conditions inconsistent with their principles. The Bedford party, as a party, had, as far as we can discover, no principle whatever. Rigby and Sandwich wanted public money, and thought that they should fetch a higher price jointly than singly. They therefore acted in concert, and prevailed on a much more important and a much better man than themselves to act with them."

bigotted. The spelling with *tt* was regular in the seventeenth and the eighteenth century, and represented the seventeenth-century pronunciation *bigo'tted.*

Page 94

faction: self-interested, turbulent, unscrupulous party.

Some legislators, etc.: an allusion to a regulation of the Athenian legislator Solon. Any citizen who, on the outbreak of a sedition, remained neutral, suffered ἀτιμία or loss of civil rights.

idem sentire de republica: to think alike on political matters. Cicero (*de Amicitia*, x. 33) speaking on the difficulty of keeping up lifelong friendship, mentions as one of the obstacles the want of agreement on political matters: "ut de re publica non idem sentiretur."

habitudes: familiar relationships, intimate associations. See pp. 16 and 92.

necessitudo sortis: the intimate relationship of the lot—an allusion to the sacred connexion between Roman officials whom the casting of lots had joined together in office. See note on p. 113.

distinguished turpitude: strongly marked, pronounced, notorious, arrant. This sense of the word is obsolete.

political societies: a reference to the Roman tribes and centuries.

affected: inclined to, were drawn to, had affection or liking for.

Page 95

tie: bond, obligation.

plus sages que les sages: slightly altered from a passage in Molière, *La Critique de l'École des Femmes.*

Thy favourites, etc.: from Addison's *Campaign* (1704), the poem commemorating the victory at Blenheim.

Page 96

essays: trials.

practised: habitually used, accustomed.

experimented: tested, put to the proof.

a bloody idol, which required, etc. This is a clear reference to Moloch, or Molech, "the abomination of the children of Ammon," to whom the Israelites made their children pass through the fire, shedding "innocent blood, even the blood of their sons and of their daughters, whom they sacrificed unto the idols of Canaan." See 1 Kings xi. 7; 2 Kings xxiii. 10; Psalm cvi. 37, 38. Compare Milton, *Paradise Lost*, I. 392 *sqq.*

of that ingenious paradoxical morality, to imagine. Note this use of *that* followed by the infinitive instead of the more usual *such...as to.* Compare Shakespeare—

> "There cannot be
> That vulture in you to devour so many."
>
> *Macbeth*, IV. iii. 73 *sq.*;

and

> "Hast thou that holy feeling in thy soul,
> To counsel me to make my peace with God?"
>
> *Richard III*, I. iv. 257 *sq.*

Page 97

without a proscription. See p. 33.

stile: historically the correct spelling. The form *style* originated in the wrong spelling of the Latin *stilus* as *stylus*.

impostors, who have, etc. See pp. 19, 20. The "impostors" alluded to are such ministers as, like the Bute contingent, professed the greatest purity and freedom from bribery only to be forced to have recourse to corruption so vile that it outdid the worst of Walpole's days. Henry Fox was put in charge of the Pay Office, familiarly called "the management of the House of Commons." See May, *Constitutional History*, I. 314 *sqq.*; Lecky, *History*, III. 56 *sq.* Compare what Macaulay in *The Earl of Chatham* (Second Essay) says—"It was no time for squeamishness. Bute was made to comprehend that the ministry could be saved only by practising the tactics of Walpole to an extent at which Walpole himself would have stared. The Pay Office was turned into a mart for votes. Hundreds of members were closeted there with Fox, and, as there is too much reason to believe, departed carrying with them the

wages of infamy. It was affirmed by persons who had the best opportunities of obtaining information, that twenty-five thousand pounds were thus paid away in a single morning. The lowest bribe given, it was said, was a bank-note for two hundred pounds."

first principles: fundamental truths as a basis for reasoning.

PAGE 98

cant: catchword having temporary influence in politics. An earlier meaning is the whining sing-song of beggars, and the probable origin is Latin *cantus*, *cantare*.

Not men, but measures. This was the plausible argument to recommend, or to excuse, desertion of party. It was widely current about this time. In 1765 Shelburne, declining Rockingham's offer of a post in his ministry, said, "As to my future conduct, your lordship will pardon me if I say 'measures, not men' will be the rule of it." Goldsmith began *The Good-natured Man* soon after this, and makes Lofty, the politician who poses as a man of influence with powerful ministers, declare, "Measures, not men, have always been my mark; and I vow, by all that's honourable, my resentment has never done the men, as mere men, any manner of harm—that is, as mere men."

this desultory and disconnected part. Burke looked askance on those who could not or would not act in party-connexion. See above, p. 92; and below, p. 100. Compare "an administration, composed of insulated individuals" (p. 34).

a gentleman with great visible emoluments: an allusion to General Conway, who came into office under Rockingham but abandoned that connexion and remained as leader of the House as well as War Secretary under Chatham. Then, offended at Lord Mount Edgecumbe's dismissal, he dropped, as Horace Walpole tells us, "all intercourse with Lord Chatham, and though he continued to conduct the King's business in the House of Commons, he would neither receive nor pay any deference to the minister's orders, acting for or against as he approved or disliked his measures." The Bedford section later on complained that Conway "always in the House adhered to his own opinion, and would not acquiesce in what was determined in council." See Lecky, *History*, III. 156 *sq.*

issue: point in question. The language is here taken from the technicalities of law.

Page 99

overt-acts: outward acts openly done in pursuance of some design; more legal phraseology.

secret tribunal: his conscience.

private whipping: the stings of conscience.

blindly to follow. Compare what Boswell (*Life of Johnson*, 1773) reports Johnson as saying—"I remember being present when he [an eminent public character] showed himself to be so corrupted, or at least something so different from what I think right, as to maintain that a member of parliament should go along with his party right or wrong....It is maintaining that you may lie to the public; for you lie when you call that right which you think wrong, or the reverse."

Page 100

ponderous: momentous, important. So Shakespeare,

> "If your more ponderous and settled project."
>
> *Winter's Tale*, IV. iii. 535.

This sense is now obsolete.

an angel or a devil: frequently quoted. "These men are devils, alone, as the saying is; *homo solus aut deus aut dæmon*; a man, alone, is either a saint or a devil; *mens ejus aut languescit aut tumescit*; and *væ soli!* in this sense; woe be to him that is so alone! These wretches do frequently degenerate from men, and, of sociable creatures, become beasts, monsters, inhumane, ugly to behold, misanthrope." Burton, *Anatomy of Melancholy*. "It had been hard for him that spake it, to have put more truth and untruth together, in few words, than in that speech, "*Whosoever is delighted in solitude, is either a wild beast, or a god.*" For it is most true that a natural and secret hatred and aversion towards society, in any man, hath somewhat of the savage beast; but it is most untrue, that it should have any character, at all, of the Divine nature; except it proceed, not out of a pleasure in solitude, but out of a love and desire, to sequester a man's self, for a higher conversation." Bacon, *Essays* ("Of Friendship"). *ὁ δὲ μὴ δυνάμενος κοινωνεῖν ἢ μηδὲν δεόμενος δι' αὐτάρκειαν οὐδὲν μέρος πόλεως, ὥστε ἢ θηρίον ἢ θεός.* Aristotle, *Politics*, I. 1.

only to be men. After "I shall admit them to be angels," we expect "In the meantime" to be followed by "they are merely devils," in accordance with the previous antithesis. Burke,

however, adopts the orator's plan and surprises us by "we are born only to be men." Compare p. 47.

Page 101

the one...the other: enmities...friendship. Compare "Inimicis te placabilem, amicis inexorabilem praebes." *Auct. Her.* IV. 15. 21.

a time for all things: a reminiscence of Ecclesiastes iii. 1.

embody. See p. 34.

miserable alternative. See p. 50.

Page 102

independent of every other: *i.e.* of every other person (*e.g.* the King) and every other combination of persons (whether House of Lords or Court Cabal).

perfect freedom: from the Book of Common Prayer, "Whose service is perfect freedom." Speaking of Shakespeare's *Tempest*, Dowden says, "The thought which seems to run through the whole...is the thought that the true freedom of man consists in service." To Burke true freedom was restrained liberty—Tennyson's "sober-suited Freedom"—not the wild licence of the French Revolution. "But to form a *free* government," he says in *Revolution in France*, "that is, to temper together these opposite elements of liberty and restraint in one consistent work, requires much thought; deep reflection; a sagacious, powerful, and combining mind." Nor could he find liberty with order in the chaos of English affairs in 1770, of which (p. 50) he says, "Anarchy predominates without freedom, and servitude without submission or subordination."

INDEX TO NOTES

The figures refer to the pages of the text.

adventures, 68
æra, 46
affected, 94
alternative, 50
an, 8
angel or devil, 100
apology, 93
apparatus, 52
appointed, 59
appropriations, 74
archaic sense, 5, 18, 47, 65
Atè, 20
authenticity, 47
awful, 59

Bacon, Francis, 66
balance of constitution, 23
bigotted, 93
Bolingbroke, Viscount, 56
bribery, 86, 97
budget, 80
burgesses, 68
burthen, 73
Bute, Earl of, 7, 13, 32, 34, 46, 56, 97

cabal, 15, 40
cant, 98
capital, 15
causa sine qua non, 46
cause, 7
Chatham, Earl of, see Pitt
Choiseul, Duke of, 46
civil, 66
civil establishment, 16
civil list, 75
closet, 15
cognizance, 52
colonial affairs, 48
comfortable, 7
committee of supply, 79
common recoveries, 72
Commons, House of, 23, 57, 58, 59, 69, 70, 75, 79, 88
compacting, 88
complaisance, 9
conciseness, 52
connexions, 14, 27, 91
consequentially, 37
constable, 5
constantly, 20
construction, 64
constructively, 72
control, 57, 61, 69
conveniency, 31
Conway, General, 98
corporations, 88
Corsica, 45, 46
criminal equity, 66
cunning, 41
curious, 43

dead letter, 15
decorum, 15
delegation, 59
delicate, 47
dependency, 19, 26
depending, 84
depression, 37
Devonshire, Duke of, 18, 24
devoted, 18
digesting, 8
discretionary, 35
disculpation, 93
disgust, 17, 41, 53
dissipation, 81
distemperature, 3
distinguished, 94
Doe, John, 71
domestick economy, 3
draughts, 91
durance, 22

duration of parliaments, 83

East India prisoners, 45
election disorders, 83
election, rights of, 62
elocution, 69
embody, 34
ens rationis, 72
enthusiasm, 92
epidemical, 58
event, 8
executory, 14
exchequer bills, 80
exorbitances, 64
experimented, 96

fashionable, 7
fee, 10
ferment, 35
fermentable, 6
Forest laws, 9
France, 44, 77
Frederick Prince of Wales, 13
freedom, 102
furniture, 9

gale, 27
genteel, 31
George III, 1, 16, 18, 51, 53, 54, 59, 77
gorging, 9
government, 2
Grafton, Duke of, 18, 28
grandees, 38

habitudes, 16
had like to, 47
harrass, 84
Harrington, James, 25
historic present, 47
Hobson, 82
holdings, 15, 91
huckstered, 21
humour, 18

idle, 81
impeachment, 61
inconveniencies, 42
infallible, 11
influence, 11, 33
insignificancy, 28
interest, 84, 85
interposition of the people, 87
irony, 19, 42, 46
issue, 98

Jacobite Rebellion, 76
James II, 9
Janissaries, 32
Junius, 5
junto, 27

King, the, 23, 57, 58, 70, 73, 102
King's Bench, 74
King's Friends, 20, 29, 32
knowing, 69

lenity, 45
letter, 65
liberally, 2
Lords, House of, 23, 57, 58, 70, 73, 102
Lowther, Sir James, 29
Luttrell, Colonel, 64, 72

machine, god in the, 79
Maevius, 71
managed, 20
Manilla ransom, 45
material, 59
measures, not men but, 98
merely, 63
Mettre le Roy, 21
milkiness, 37
Moloch, 96
moot, 24
mortmain, 12

navy bills, 80
necessitudo sortis, 94
Newcastle, Duke of, 15, 17, 18
nice equipoise, 87
nicely, 42

obsolete meaning, 7, 11, 26, 52, 56, 65, 79, 84, 94, 100

Osnaburg, 53
overt-acts, 99
oxymoron, 50

Parliament, 60, 69, 70, 83
party, 4, 93, 99
Pelham, 80
people, the, 2
perspective, 20
petitions, 59
phrensy, 58
piety, 49
pious, 45
pitiful, 69
Pitt, Earl of Chatham, 1, 4, 12, 15, 17, 34, 53, 92
placemen, 83
Plato, 20
plausibilities, 3
ponderous, 100
Portland, Duke of, 29
practised, 96
prejudice, 9
preposterously, 71
prerogative, 11
prescription, 46
Pretender, the, 16
prevention, 79
previous question, 79
projectors, 54
proper, 18
proscription, 18, 33, 97
Pulteney, Earl of Bath, 19

quarters, indemnity from, 68

refined, 38, 55
religiously, 61
respectable, 31
retrenchment, 27
revenue officers, 85
reversionary, 16
riots, 30
Rockingham, Marquis of, 18, 24, 89, 92
Rockingham ministry, 33, 92
Roe, Richard, 71
rota, 26
runners, 21

Saxon constitution, 9
scandalous, 89
Seasonable Hints, 4, 19
senate, 31
Septennial Act, 60
Shelburne, 39
Ship-money, 9
sinking fund, 80
Solon, 94
sort, 1
soused, 19
speculation, 4, 8
splendid bile, 9
stamina, 11
Star Chamber, 66
stile, 97
subject, 2
Sully, Duke of, 7

temperaments, 65
that, 96
Titius, 71
tolerably, 43
Tories, 4, 16, 19
traverse, 28
Triennial Act, 60
trustees, 7, 64
trusts, 39, 63, 64
Turkish army, 15

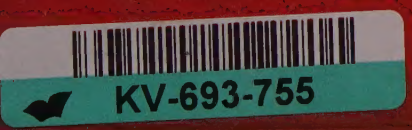
unoperative, 81
untoward, 6
usufruct, 10

versatility, 91
vine-dresser, 46

which, 70
Whig, Whigs, 4, 8, 12, 22
Wilkes, 1, 30, 34, 62, 64, 66, 67, 72
wisdom of our ancestors, 82

yeomanry, 43

CAMBRIDGE: PRINTED BY
W. LEWIS, M.A.
AT THE UNIVERSITY PRESS


KV-693-755